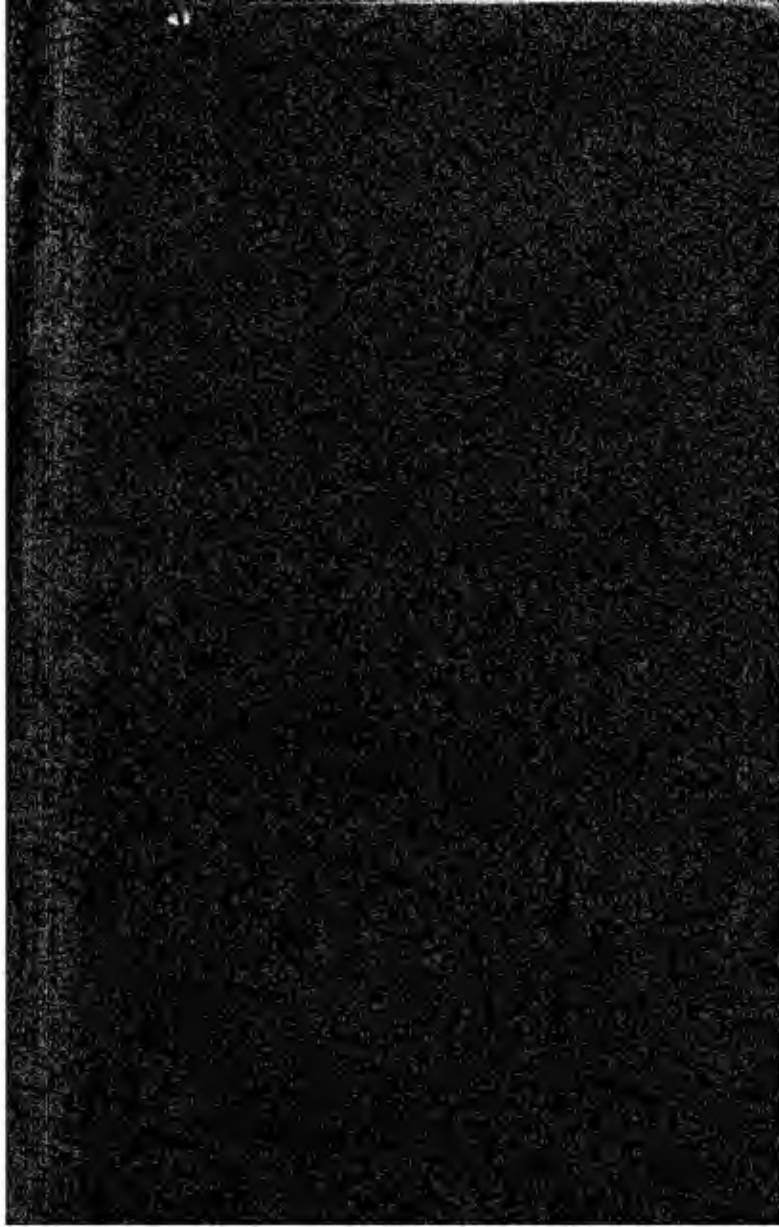


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INDIA AND LAOS

A Study Of Cultural Relations

48902



By

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PREFACE

A stay in a foreign country helps self-introspection. A larger perspective and a different milieu than the one to which one is accustomed helps to correct dogged obsessions and prejudices. In the 19th century many intellectuals of Europe studied Asia and these studies brought about a new orientation in their outlook. Goethe, William Jones and Burnouf were kindred spirits who across the times and conditions joined in the worship of undying beauty. It will not be therefore, incorrect to assert that these studies contributed a great measure of oriental inspiration to the mainstream of humanism in Europe.

I was influenced by the pioneering contributions of Prof. Oldenberg, a Vedist and Buddhist scholar of Germany, whose inspiring words are worth quoting :

“Very few have been born on earth who were self-luminous, whose light was not a borrowed light, who stood fully revealed in their own radiance of truth. We see partial manifestation of Man in many persons renowned for their wisdom, or statesmanship, who have dominated others by their own will, and moulded history in the pattern of their own desires. But the complete expression of man is seen in him alone who represents in himself

all men in all ages and lands and whose consciousness has not been broken up by the customary walls of age or race or nation.''

There was enough incentive to work on one of the greatest classics-*Dhammapada* and I prepared a word concordance, a desideratum in the field of Buddhistic studies to enable me to study the sequence of ideas in Buddhism. In the light of my researches I set myself to translate the sacred text into English afresh.

The story of India's cultural impact does not end with the dawn of the modern age or with the political changes that have taken place in recent years. It is true that the influence of European culture tended to create new outlook in Asia. But the fact cannot be ruled out that the cultural heritage of India also had come to be a perennial source of inspiration to the people everywhere.

Though centuries of foreign rule in India gave a set-back to the movement of cultural exchanges within South-East Asia, yet the work done in earlier centuries continued to strengthen and inspire the edifice of friendship which India came to build up with the neighbouring countries of this region. There can indeed be no better acknowledgement of this than the newly forged near identity of views on international problems and contemporary issues by the countries of this region and their growing awareness to the truths of a higher life.

Without seeming to be self-complimentary one cannot help recalling how at the Inter Asian Conference at Delhi, the representatives of almost all the Asian countries expressed their 'unbounded gratefulness' to India describing her as 'the Mother of our culture, art and civilisation.'

During my stay as a teacher of Sanskrit and Pali in Laos I was often struck by close expressions, customs and traditions. I shared my feelings with my friends through letters. The tonal aspect of the language in the South-East Asia was something new which presented certain difficulties. However the living stimulus of my colleagues in the Buddhist Research Institute Vientiane helped me in familiarising myself with phonetics of this Austro-Asiatic language.

I am grateful to all officers in the Embassy of India in Laos and the Indian Merchants for their valuable co-operation in the discharge of my cultural work.

I am thankful to His Excellencies Prince Boun Om Na Champassak, minister for Cultes, Impenge Suryadhye, minister for Justice, Planning and President World fellowship of Buddhists in Laos and Mr. Louis Connick Director, Asia Foundation in Laos for their deep interest in my work in that country.

In this study my wife Jai Rani Sehgal who is well-versed in Sanskrit helped me considerably in fostering closer relations with the countries of South-East Asia in general and

Laos in particular. My daughter Madhuri Sehgal has prepared the Index of this book. My son Ashok Kumar Sehgal B. E. (Mech. Engineering) extended his help in putting up the Posters in Pali at important places in Laos. All of them deserve my thanks.

In the end I quote the immortal words of Sanskrit poet Kalidasa :

Until the wise are satisfied,
I cannot feel that skill is shown.
The best trained mind requires support
And does not trust itself alone.

आ परितोषाद् विदुषां
न साधु मग्ये प्रयोग-विज्ञानम् ।
बलवदपि शिक्षितानाम्
आत्मन्य् अप्रत्ययं चेतः ॥
(शाकुन्तलम् १.२)

Brahmavihar,
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S.R. SEHGAL



Whose conquest cannot be overthrown, whose conquest nobody equals in the world, whose realm is infinite, whose place you cannot locate. By what steps can you show the way of that Buddha ?
(Dhammapada 179)

यस्स जितं नावर्जीयति
जितमस्स नो याति कोचि लोके ।
तं बुद्धमनन्तगोचरं
अपदं केन पदेन नेस्सथ ॥



The Story of That-Lvang of Vientiane (Laos)

The story goes that in India, thousands of years ago, during the 14th or 15th day of the waxing moon of the 12th month, *Ashok the Good*, completed the erection of the 84,000 stupas he had built for the relics of *Goutama the Buddha*. He celebrated his achievements in the moonlight.

The occasion is still celebrated in November as is proper in the Buddhist countries in which a relic of the Blessed one, ashes, a hair or an eye-lash, is venerated.

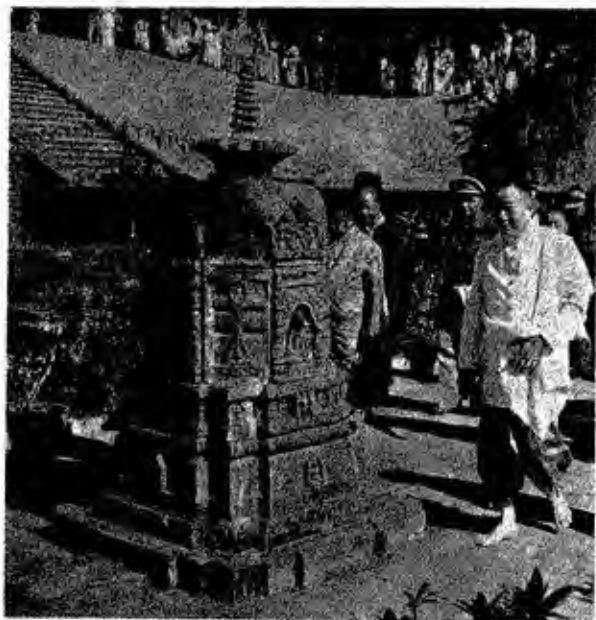
The That-Lvang or Royal That^{*} is located 5 Kms. east of Vientiane the capital of Laos.

In 1566 King Setthaathirath erected the That over a small stupa built in the 13th century, which according to tradition contained a hair of the Buddha as well as fabulous treasures. Since then, every year, the people of Vientiane celebrated this festival with special splendour, observing the same rituals hallowed by centuries of traditions.



His Majesty the King of Laos being received by the President of India at the Palam airport New Delhi.

His Majesty the King at Bodh Gaya worshipping in the historic temple of the Lord Buddha.





His Royal Highness Prince Souvanna Phouma inspecting the Indian Hospital run by the Indian Medical Mission in Vientiane.

His Royal Highness Prince Souvanna Phouma attending Indian Republic Day reception held by His Excellency S. Bikram Shah, ambassador of India in Laos.

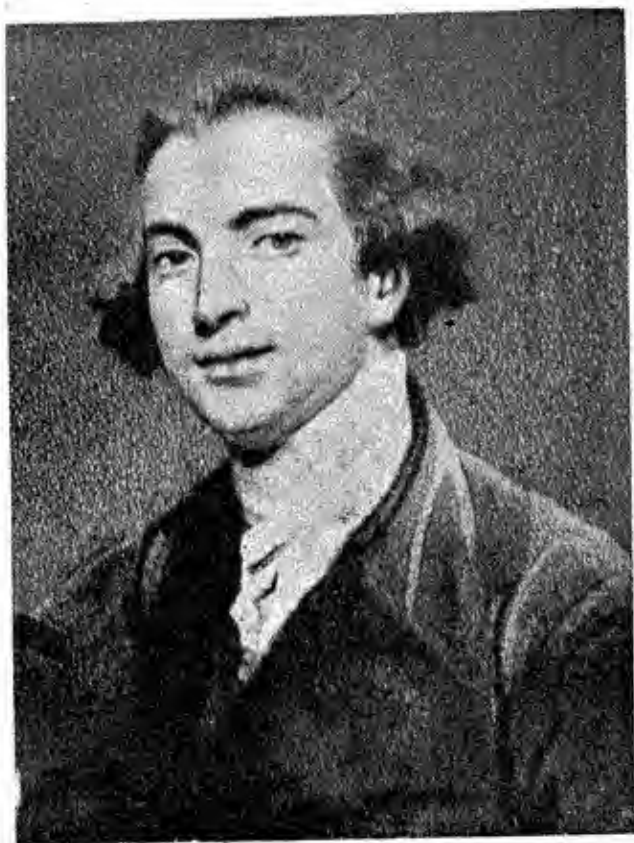




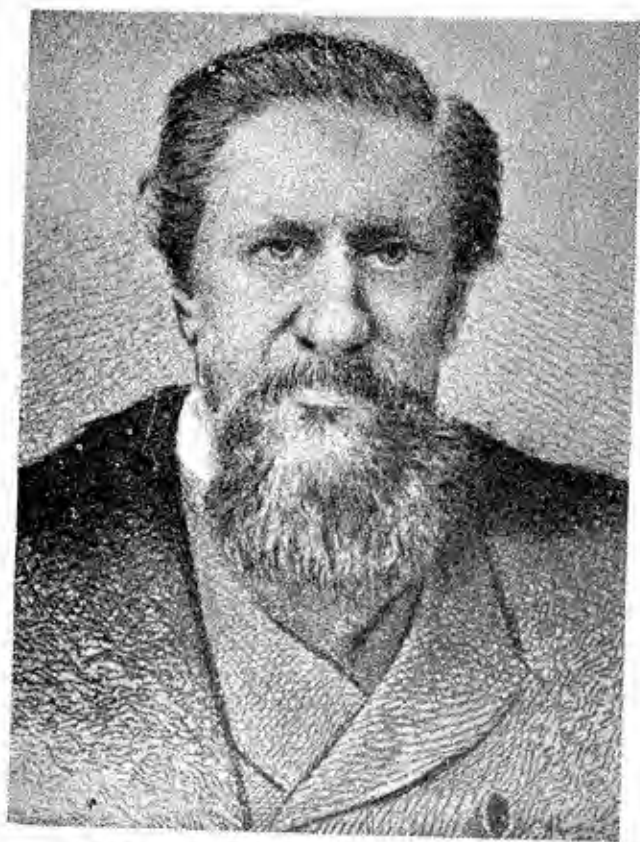
His Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Laos and Princess at Bodh Gaya Temple.

His Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Laos receiving Honorary Degree of Vidya Varidhi at Nalanda University by the Education Minister Shri Satyendra Narayana Sinha of Bihar.

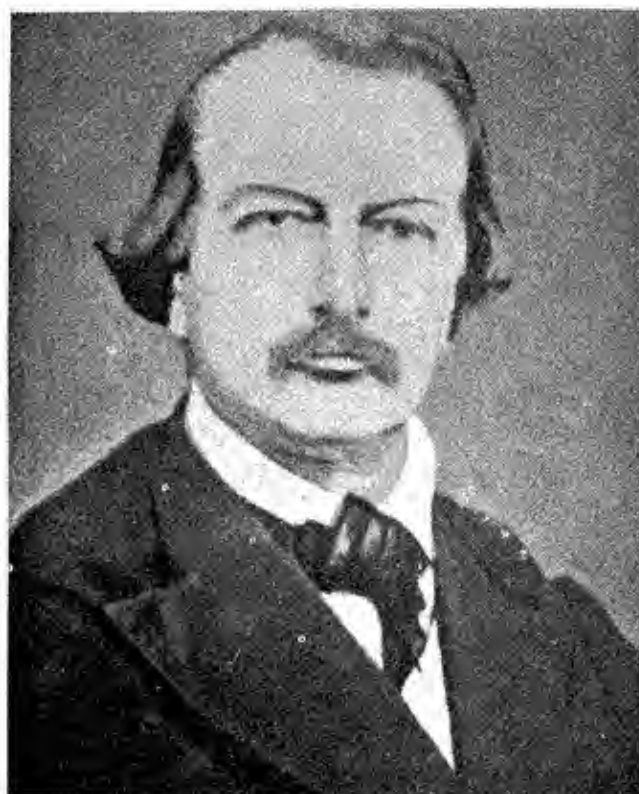




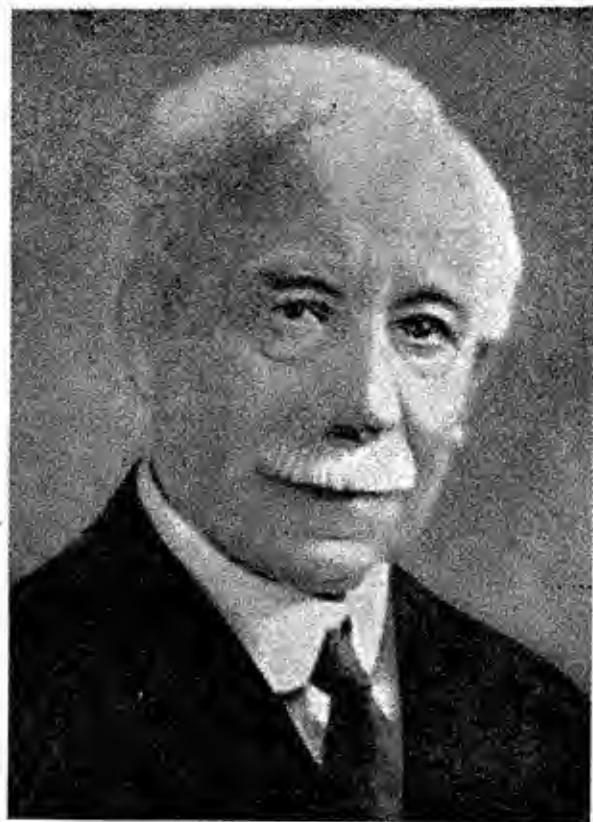
Sir William Jones whose pioneering researches on India and Indian literature fascinated the minds of intellectuals in Europe.



Edwin Arnold, the author of the celebrated book *The Light of Asia*—an English rendering of the Sanskrit Epic—*Buddhacharitam*. This translation was rendered into many European languages and was prized by His Majesty the King of Thailand.



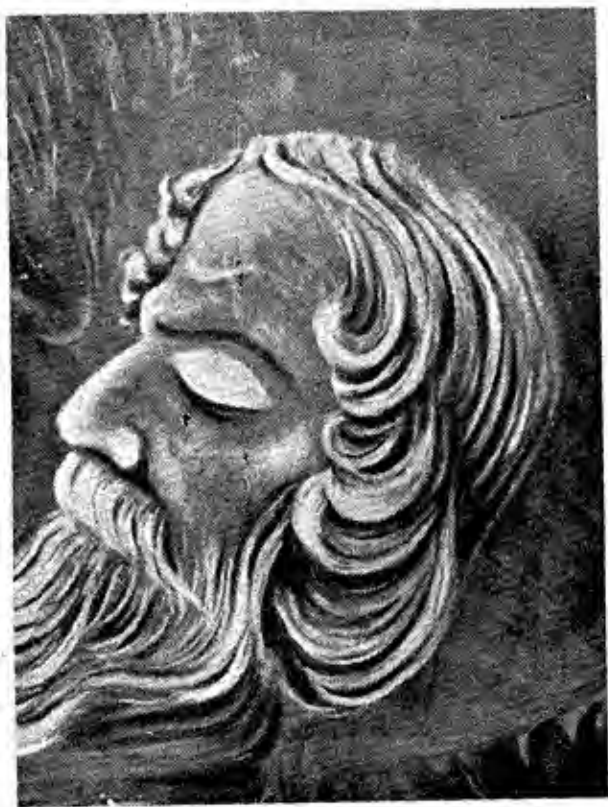
Prof. Albrecht Weber, a pioneer in many fields in Germany translated the *Dhammapadam* into German. This translation was the first rendering into modern language of Europe, which helped the intellectuals of Europe to study and appreciate the genius of India.



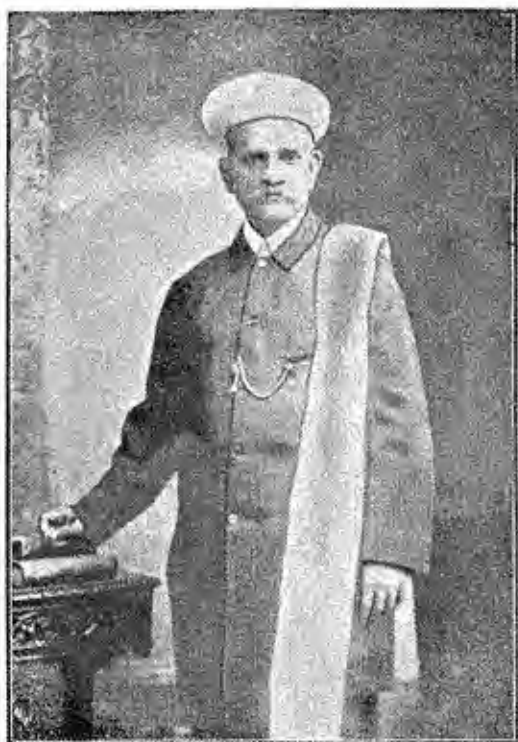
Prof. Sylvain Levi who rediscovered many Buddhist texts lost for long in India. By his mastery of both the Tibetan and Chinese languages he furthered the scope and range of Buddhist Studies. At Tagore's invitation the French scholar stayed in the Shantiniketan and delivered a series of lectures on Indian culture.



Prof Louis Renou, the author of the celebrated work *The Religion of Ancient India*. His researches on Indian culture and civilization won for him an international recognition.



Buddhism was one of the many influences which helped in moulding the creative writings of Gurudev Rabindra Nath Tagore.



Prof R. G. Bhandarkar whose contributions on the Religions of India were admired all over the world.

नमो तस्स भगवतो अरहतो सम्मा-सम्बुद्धस्स

Namo tassa Bhagavato Arahato
Samma-sambuddhassa

Honour to Him, the Blessed One, Exalted One,
the fully Enlightened One.



The Saviour of the world

*Prince Siddhartha styled on earth,
In Earth and Heavens and Hells incomparable,
All honoured, Wisest, Best, most Pitiful
The Teacher of Nirvana and the Law.*

Conquer anger by love, conquer evil by good, conquer greed by liberality and conquer untruth by truth.

Go ye, O Bhikkhus and wander forth for the gain of the many, in compassion for the world, for the good, for the welfare of gods and men. Proclaim, O Bhikkhus, the doctrine glorious, Preach ye a life of holiness, perfect and pure. Go then through every country convert those not converted. Go therefore, each one travelling alone filled with compassion. Go, rescue and receive. Proclaim that a blessed Buddha has appeared in the world, and that he is preaching the Law of Holiness.

I shall refuse to accept salvation unless the last devil on earth has first entered it.

(His infinite Message of Peace, Love
and Compassion)



"To repay the debt I owe to all beings and so increase the happiness of all in this world and the next, I preach Dhamma (virtue and duty) to all and reign with virtue. There is no such charity as the charitable gift of Dhamma (law of piety) and no such friendship as the friendship in piety. The Dhamma (law of piety) consists in these things, namely obedience to father and mother, charity to friends, acquaintances, relations, ascetics and Brahmins and respect for the sanctity of life. May mercy, charity, truthfulness, purity, honesty, gentleness, benevolence and such other virtues increase in my subjects.

They should also practise economy and avoid hoarding much wealth.

"To rule according to Dhamma (law of piety), to work according to law of piety, to give happiness to all according to law of piety, and to protect the subjects is the motto of my Administration. The aim of all my activities is the welfare and happiness of the people. With this object in view, I devote my attention to those far and near as to my own relatives, so that I may guide them to happiness. I work only to attain this object.

"A noble king does not attach much importance to or hanker after name and fame. If he desires to have good reputation, it is only with this object that his subjects may serve the cause of Dhamma (righteousness) and may follow its path.

"The greatest calamity is sin. It is difficult to attain at the same time both secular and spiritual ends. But my teachings have promoted respect and love for righteousness in the hearts of the people, and they will continue to do so in future also.

"All my endeavours are to get rid of the debt of gratitude that I owe to all living beings, to make them happy in this world and to enable them to attain heaven hereafter."

—ASHOK, THE GOOD



India built up a magnificent language, Sanskrit and through this language and its arts and architecture, it sent its vibrant message to far away countries. It produced the Upanishads, the Geeta, and the Buddha. Hardly any language in the world has probably played that vital part in the history of a race which Sanskrit has. It was not only the vehicle of the highest thought and some of the finest literature, but it became the unifying bond for India even though there were political divisions. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata were woven into the texture of millions of lives in every generation for thousands of years.

—JAWAHARLAL NEHRU



Laos, the little world of the Buddhists

The population of Laos is roughly 50 lakhs. It is 2100 kms from Calcutta and 1000 kms. from Bangkok.

It is surrounded in the North by the People's Republic of China and the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam ; in the South by Cambodia ; in the East by the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam and the Republic of Viet-Nam and in the West by Burma and Thailand.

It extends from the 14th parallel to the 23rd parallel of the northern hemisphere, and covers an area of 1,000 kms in length. Its largest width from Phongsaly to Houaphan measures is about 500 kms; its smallest breadth from Mekong to the neck of Mugia is about 140 kms.

The total superficies of Laos is 231,000 kms. It is as big as the state of Victoria in Australia, a little more than half of France or a little less than the state of Oregon in the United States of America.

It shares the climatic life of South-East Asian countries. Morphological landscapes

are found in form of tablelands. The great platforms to the west are broken up by erosion which slope down to the Mekong all along its valleys.

This river like the Ganga in India is a symbol of national unity of this part of the world. This pervades the life of Laos and embellishes it with its majestic seal as a dispenser of the natural resources of the country.

A quarter of the population of Laos is constituted of very different ethnical groups namely Thai Dam, Yao and Man in the North; Meo in the Central mountains and Kha in the Saravane and Attapeau provinces of the South. They live on rearing and small cultivation, each having his own dialect and his own costumes, —coloured costumes, bedecked with long necklaces and silver ornaments. The population is concentrated mainly all along the fertile plain of Mekong and the principal towns such as Vientiane which consists of 200,000 inhabitants. The other important towns are Luang-Prabang —the royal capital of Laos, Savanakheth and Pakse. In towns the Chinese population is in majority.

The life of the people is moulded by the rhythm of the rains. It is a natural phenomenon peculiar to the whole of South-East Asia because of an immense continent being in the midst of the wide stretch of water. The

country enjoys intensely an agricultural life. In the month of June the advent of the rainy season imparts a new joy to millions of the people who sing songs in praise of the God Impenge (Indra). Men and women share this thrill by spending weary hours during the ensuing winter evenings.

Rice is the chief crop. Tobacco, sugarcane and maize follow one another lending variety to the agricultural output. There is farming in the valleys, cattle breeding on the tablelands and forests along the bank of the river. There is mineral wealth which is being discovered by engineers from France, India, America and other countries. Roads, Schools and dispensaries are being built with the aid of friendly countries.

Laos is a Kingdom with constitutional monarchy. The King is the Head of the State. He nominates the Prime Minister who in return sets up the King's Government. The Parliament consists of two Houses.

The National Assembly is composed of 59 deputies, elected every five years by universal suffrage.

The King's Council is composed of 12 members, out of which 6 are elected by the National Assembly and 6 are nominated by His Majesty the King—thus constituting the Upper House.

Laos is divided into 18 provinces and each

province has a Chaokhoueng (a Governor) as its head.

Ever since 1893, Laos was under the French Protectorate. It was endowed with a Constitution in 1947 and was declared independent in 1949.

In spite of the Geneva Accords of 1954, Laos was invaded by the Viet-Minh forces in 1953, for the first time during the Indo-China war. The period which followed and which even today continues to be is that of the war.

In 1962, the Second Geneva Conference destined to solve the Laotian problem was identified to guarantee the neutrality of the country by 13 Nations, known as the signatories of the Geneva Agreements. North Viet-Nam is the only one which does not respect these Agreements.

A Neutral country by virtue of its status, Lao practises the policy of maintaining good relations with all the countries. At Vientiane, the Capital of the Kingdom of Laos, one finds diplomatic representatives from the continental China, such as the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam besides those of the United States, the Thailand, the Republic of Vietnam and the Philippines, India and others.

Theravada (Hinayana) of Buddhists is the state religion as opposed to Mahayana of Japan. The day-to-day life is moulded on the

Buddhist pattern. People are honest, truth-loving, happy-go-lucky and beautiful. The society is free and poses no problem for integration. Generally women are beautiful and more hard-working than men. The attitude of people can be summed up in one sentence in their own language—'Bo pen yang' '*never mind*'.

Ties between Laos and India

The Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi's recent visit to the countries of South-East Asia cannot fail to recall the influence which India, centuries ago, had wielded in shaping the culture, beliefs and religion of these countries. It is true that this influence underwent a long period of decline when the destinies of the mother country came under the shadow of alien powers. But even today anyone visiting the countries of South-East Asia would be struck by the enduring signs of this influence in the facts of linguistics, semantics common customs, dancing, costumes and religious beliefs. Perhaps Prof. Rawlinson an eminent British scholar had this influence in mind when he said that India suffers today in the estimate of the world more through the world's ignorance of her achievements than in the absence of insignificance of her achievements.

Anyone visiting Bangkok today would be amazed by the multitude of words in every day speech which are derivatives from Sanskrit. A popular word for greeting in Thailand is

'labaydi Khap' of which origin may be traced to the Sanskrit word '*Swasti*'. This word of traditional greeting has a long history extending over three thousand years which finds its earliest expression in the Rigveda. The Thai word 'Namaskan' in Sanskrit/Pali *Namaskar* is another instance which proves our deep ties with Laos.

Similarly the words *Vela* for time as well as '*hasa*' are the same as in Sanskrit/Pali. These have been used in the same form with the meaning in both Thailand and Laos for thousand of years. Anyone listening to the radio broadcasts of these countries will be struck by the frequent occurrence of these words. There are no synonyms of these words both in Thai and Lao languages to express these ideas.

Buddhist monks of India had visited these countries to spread the Master's message in far off lands, across the wide seas, high mountains and vast deserts. They were successful in carrying out their selfless mission as evident from their impact on language, arts and architectures of this area. Today the extent of ancient cultural influences can be measured by a visit to the ancestral area in the North to tropical Indonesia in the South and from the border lands of Persia to China and Japan. This visit will convince everyone that ancient

India was the radiating centre of a civilization which by its religious thought, philosophy, literature and traditions had left a mark on the races which were wholly diverse and scattered over the greater part of Asia.

There is also a visible impact of our heritage on the scriptures and every day thinking of the people of this area. The more one stays and studies the material the more one feels amazed at the variety which the current vocabulary of these areas bears to Sanskrit words.

A familiar early morning sight in countries like Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia and Laos is that of Buddhist monks draped in orange robes and down cast eyes, walking along the streets of towns and villages begging food. They file past in perfect order before devotees squatting on the ground who kneel down before the procession of monks. They tip their bowls before the devotees as they move on. The leader of the monks blesses the devotees with the words 'Sukhi Hotu'—'may you be happy'. 'Sukhi' is a Sanskrit word meaning 'happy'.

All the rites and rituals connected with birth and death in most of these countries are akin to India. In marriages the white thread called 'Phukhain' or '*Mangal Sutta*' is fastened to the wrists of the bride and bridegroom. They are blessed by elders. The dowry system

prevalent in India is common in Laos and Thailand. Monks like the Brahmans in India administer all the religious rites. Men usually wear dhoti on these sacred occasions which is a relic of vedic times. Prayers said at the time of birth and death are the same as in the Atharvaveda. The ancient phrase 'May you have a house full of children and grand children' are commonly repeated in Laos, Cambodia and Thailand at the time of marriages. The word for wedding in Laos is called '*Vivah*'. The custom in Laos is that the bridegroom goes to the house of the bride for good. In few cases, however, they follow the Indian customs viz the bride goes to the house of the bridegroom and such marriages are called '*Avah*'. The cremation rite is also identical with India. Prayers are said for the peace of the departed soul. The dead bodies are cremated. If an old man or a woman dies a big feast is held and shared enthusiastically by all relatives and friends. Even alcohol drinks are offered in which both men and women participate equally. Some persons throw coins over the dead body which are treasured as an aid to longevity. A peculiar custom in these countries is that sometimes dead bodies of some respectable people are preserved for a week or so which is injunction to avoid bad smell.

The word for Radio Station is Sthani

Vithayu. Sthani means station which is a derivative of the word 'Stan' of Indo-European origin. The Lao word 'Vithayu' is a phonetic change from Sanskrit 'Vidyut' which means literally, lightning. The letter 'T' is slightly changed to aspirated sound as we have preserved in final letter of the English word Path. The words for teacher and food in Laos are Achan and Ahan—derivatives of the Sanskrit words *Acharya* and *Ahara* respectively. The final 'r' in Laos is changed to 'n'.

The names of days in a week are similar to ours. Sunday is called Van Athita. Athita is phonetically changed version of *Aditya* meaning Sun and so is Van from *Var* signifying day. Monday is known as Van Chan. Chan is an abbreviated form of *Chandra*. Similarly Tuesday is Van Ankhan. Ankhan is another a word for *Angar*. Wednesday is Van phut in place of the Indian word *Buddhawar*. Thursday is called Van Pahat which is similar to *Brihaspativar* in Sanskrit. Friday and Saturday are known in Laos by Van Suk and Van Sao respectively. One is struck by the beauty of the colourful development of Sanskrit heritage. It may be a matter for great amusement to know that the national language of Thailand is influenced by Sanskrit while Lao derives influence from Pali the language of the Buddhist canons.

Both in monasteries as well as the Royal families the use of Sanskrit words and idioms is quite common. Monks when they have to ask 'How old are you' would say '*Ayu Thodie*' in place of Lao expression 'chak pee'. The members of the Royal family also use the same expression. Whenever a common man refers to the parts of body of Royal personage the parts are embellished with Sanskrit prefix '*Phra*' which means excellent. The king is called '*Phra Rasa*' the Queen is called '*Phra Mahesi*', their head - *Phra Siras* and their face is termed as *Phra mukh*. The crown prince is called '*Ong Mukut*' (*Ang Mukut*). This shows an amazing influence of Sanskrit/Pali on the life of the Buddhist people. One is reminded of high characters in Sanskrit Plays who speak Sanskrit on the stage. The monks address themselves as *Attma* like the Indian monks who call themselves as '*Atmaram*' i.e. delighting in spiritual heights.

These words are the heirloom of thoughts, knowledge and feelings, all histories, all poetry, all our philosophical system, all that we are and will be. It is the nutshell in the fairy tale out of which the endless web is forthcoming unrolling, fold after fold, of marvellous designs and matchless variety of colours.



Buddhism in Laos

It is an admitted fact that Buddhism was prevalent in Laos in the thirteenth or fourteenth century shortly after the king Chao Fa Ngum had achieved the national unity of the country.

During the reign of Chao Setthathirath about seventy temples were erected around Vientiane. His successor Souigna Vongsa organised these places of worship which flourished as centres of Buddhist culture, arts and architecture. The monks as representatives of the Buddha were highly respected for their high character. Villages echoed with the gongs attracting the people to the message of the Lord. People used to gather in temples once a week to listen to the teachings of monks. They also consulted the monks on every occasion of life namely birth, sickness, death and about dreams. Teachings of monks served as solace to the people belonging to all walks of life.

The kingdom of Vientiane was attacked and conquered in 1778 by the Siamese General Cho Mahak-rasad Suk and it lost its Emerald Buddha as well as the Wat Phra Bang. Again in 1873 people from Ynnan devastated the

temples and broke into the monuments. All the temples namely Wat Phra Keyo, Wat Phiavat and That Luang were deprived of their glory. The monk community kept the faith alive though they had failed to understand the inner meaning of the Pali texts. They could not stop the inroads of the 'Phi', the worst enemy of Buddhism which has badly affected the country.

Buddha's life fascinated the imagination of the people. Minstrels enchanted the devotees by singing the songs of the various episodes of the Master. The opening verses of a song ran thus : 'There lived in a city of India, known as Kapilaphat (*Kapilavastu*) a magnificent and wealthy prince named Sisutto (Shuddhodana). His wife, lovelier than a picture was called Maya. She had a dream about the birth of one who was to become the most powerful Emperor on Earth, the Buddha. His name was Sithad (*Siddharatha*)'.

'He was married at the age of sixteen but was disappointed with the life in the Palace. He had a son—Rahun (*Rahul*). He renounced the world to accomplish the role of the mendicant. He was influenced by four sights namely an old man, a sick person, a corpse and a wandering ascetic. The first three made him feel of the existence of human sufferings and the last one proved a solace to him.

He fasted for years and years torturing himself denying food until he was reduced to a skeleton. He got enlightenment under the Bodhi tree. He understood the beauty of Right action and Right way. He propagated the noble truths for forty-five years. His way of teaching was humble hurting nobody but telling the people in persuasive language. Many people became his disciples devoted disciples. He ennobled the down-trodden people. Among the many examples in his life the people of Laos loved the episode of Amrapali—the courtesan of the Capital. According to the prevailing version once she heard the arrival of the Lord in her mango grove in the village. She called the Master and paid homage to the Buddha and respectfully invited him and his Samgh to partake of some refreshment at her house the following day. Gautama—the Buddha gave his consent by silence. He dressed himself early in the morning and went with the Samgh to courtesan's house. She set sweet rice and cakes before her guests and waited on them in person. When the meal was over, Amrapali, the courtesan, had a stool brought and sat down by the Buddha's side. She submitted to him thus :

'Lord I present this dwelling to the order of mendicants of which you are the head'.



Early morning offerings to monks.

The gift was accepted and after a discourse the Buddha departed from the place.

The popularity of this episode is universal in Laos and the people sing this song with the help of *kenes*, a musical instrument.

The people of Laos have inherited a deep conviction that all life is suffering that all belongings are transient that the present existence is only among a thousand others that salvation depends on earning merit in life. Its followers are endowed with human qualities namely humility, gentleness, kindness, justice and charity.

There is a proverb in Laos 'Hed Bun' earn merit by giving alms finally ensuring salvation. This is in the blood of the Laotian people. All full moon days are considered sacred for such acts. People though non-vegetarian by habit take some vegetables that day. Afternoons are devoted to the recitation of Pali texts.

There is a big number of festivals in Laos. Among them the new year festival is called 'Pee Mai' which is marked by rejoicings. The festival is called 'Bun' in Lao language. The concept of Bun goes back to hoary antiquity. The word bun is a derivative from Pali word 'Punna' (Sanskrit *Punya*). The initial 'P' of Pali/Sanskrit words is changed to 'B'. For example Pap, Puja, are changed to Bap and Busa respectively. The festivals Bang Fay, Khao Vatsa,

Ok Vatsa, That Luang, Pha Vet and the like are celebrated with great pomp and show in big cities.

The Buddhist faith teaches the people to earn merit :

*Punnam cet puriso kayira
kayirath ainam puna punahm,
tam hi chandam kayiratha
sukho punnassa ucchayo-**

If a man earns merit let him earn it again and again. Let him delight in it, The accumulation of good is delightful'.

* पुण्यं चेत् पुरुषः कुर्यात्
कुर्याद् एनं पुनः पुनः ।
तं हि धनं कुर्यात्
सुखं पुण्यस्य उच्यते ॥ (178)

Monkhood in Laos

It is a deep conviction in the South-East Asia that monks represent the Buddha. As stated earlier they enjoy the highest status in society. Even the king has to pay due reverence when he is visited by a monk or by a party of monks. One is reminded of ancient scenes of India where sages like Vasishtha, Kanva and Kashyap were honoured by the Emperor Dushyanta in the fifth century A.D. A few illustrations from Kalidasa, the prince among Sanskrit poets will not be out of place here. When Dushyanta enters the hermitage of the sage Kanva he shares his wish with the chariater to visit the sage in the modest dress. Again when he after conquering the demons returns from heaven he breaks his journey at the penance grove of the sage Kashyap and pays his respects to him. Even today such scenes are not wanting in Thailand, Cambodia and Laos where the King, the Prime Minister and high officials bow down before monks. The faith of the people of these countries is rooted in the conviction that salvation is attained when they are baptized in accordance with the canons of Buddhism. The period of

monkhood is immaterial. It may last for a week, a year or years. The King and Prime Minister must turn to be monks and monks rejoin their families at will. Unlike India there are no restrictions on the period of this system. The justification is found in the middle path enjoined by the Master in his teachings.

There is a large number of monasteries in these Buddhist countries. Thailand has approximately 30,000 wats. Vientiane, the capital of Laos presents a scenic view of monasteries dotted all over the thickest streets of the capital. Boys of ten or twelve are initiated and they are called 'Chua' or 'Samner' a derivative from the Sanskrit word 'Shramana'. For a number of years they undergo training and serve the Samgh with deep devotion.

In wats the new entrants study elementary Pali and its literature. In society the monks administer all rites and rituals connected with birth, marriage and death. There are also middle and high schools where higher courses are taught in Pali. In Thailand as well as Cambodia there are universities where the study of Buddhism is conducted upto B.A and M.A. standard. The curriculum as in Indian universities Nalanda and Darbhanga, is oriented to suit the needs of the modern age. The senior monks addressed reverentially as 'Phra

Mahan' help in teaching the young students in wats.

The rite of initiation called in Buddhist term 'Upasampada' is very near to that of India. The wats as constituted in these countries are Gurukulas of ancient India and are to all intents and purposes residential universities in the modern age. The teacher imparts moral and intellectual part of education, truth speaking, observance of Dhamma, devotion to the teacher, hospitality and charity. There is an emphasis over the cultivation of high ideals and development of character. The system of wearing the saffron-coloured garments by the students is strictly in accordance with the Buddhist way of life. They accompany the procession of monks in the morning for alms and break their fast with the collected alms. At 11 A.M. or so the laymen bring the food to the wats which consists of rice, meat and, vegetables and tea. The meat of pig is considered to be the most nourishing. Recently the government of Thailand has started the oriented courses in initiating the young students into the Buddhist discipline during their long vacations. It will be interesting to trace the history of the word 'Education'. It is derived from the Latin word 'Educo' meaning I lead forth, I bring up a child from e, out and 'duco' I lead the child to the teacher. The Vedic

word '*Upanayana*' has the same idea, i.e. upa, near and 'nayana' taking, from the root 'ni' to lead, leading the child to the teacher. The parallel Indo-Iranian ritual called—navajit, among Parsis conclusively proves that this rite has influenced the peoples largely.

The Vedic rite *Samavartana* meaning return of a student from his Alma Mater on the completing of his studies is also observed in these countries. A high priest administers the ritual who is assisted by four or five monks. He lights candles and starts the ceremony with the recitation of verses from the '*Mangal Sutta*'. He sprinkles water with blades of grass on the students for a number of times. The student also repeats at places some of the verses. He takes off his girdle a symbol of austerities and puts on new clothes of a layman. In Vedic age the graduate was called 'Snataka' and in accordance with the canons of the age was named a 'Vidyasnataka'. In the South-East Asia he is respectfully designated 'Maha' a word derivative of the Sanskrit word 'Mahan' i.e. great. When the student finally leaves his wat a girl is specially invited to lead him from his educational centre. The introduction of a girl in this ceremony is similar to what happened in the Vedic times. In India the girl is considered as a symbol of of purity, beauty and loyalty from times imme-

morial. In the Ramayana age there was a strong belief among the people that good luck resides in the person of a girl.¹ A party of unmarried girls was selected to receive Rama on his return from his long exile and to offer him the coronation ablution. Valmiki has recorded this feature saying that Rama was given a welcome first by girls and then by his trusted generals and ministers. Even to this day the girl is preferred to fasten the auspicious cord around the wrist of host. Later on the author of the *Mahabharata*² expressly records this tradition that the girl is a symbol of good luck :

Nityam nivasate lakshmi
kanyakasu pratishthita.¹

i.e.

Good fortune always resides in maidens.

1. नित्यं निवसते लक्ष्मीः कन्यकासु प्रतिष्ठिता । (Mah xiii, 11,14)

2. अक्षतं जातरूपं च गावः कन्यास्तथा द्विजाः ।

नरा मोदकहस्ताश्च रामस्य पुरतो ययुः । (Ram vi, 131)



India and the Buddhist way of life

India is a country of religions and faiths ever born on this earth. Perhaps there is no faith which is not represented in our country. The Six Systems of Philosophy bear ample testimony to this view. It was India which for the first time conceived the universality of Man as early as 600 B.C. Most of the concepts of Buddhism were propounded in the Upanishads. Gautama, the Buddha was Hindu and worked for the Hindus. He preached in India for forty-five years his views for the welfare and good of the people. His teachings fresh as the flowers of springtime and as enchanting as the music of moonlit streams gave a new impulse, a fresh inspiration and an eternal rational thinking. The weeds which had overgrown the Vedic society were thus removed and the people recaptured vitality anew.

Hindu India has been able to assimilate the teachings of the great master. His Panchshilas are as follows :

- (I) Let no one kill any living being.

- (II) Let no one take what is not given to him.
- (III) Let no one speak a lie.
- (IV) Let no one drink intoxicating drinks.
- (V) Let no one have unchaste sexual intercourse.

These aforesaid basic concepts of Buddhism were conceived much earlier by Patanjali—the author of *Yogasutra*, and called *Panchayamas* e.g.,

Ahimsa-satyam-asteya-brahmacharya-aparigraha, i.e.

- (I) *Ahimsa*—Non-violence.
- (II) *Satyam*—Truth.
- (III) *Asteya*—Non-stealing.
- (IV) *Brahmacharya*—Celebacy.
- (V) *Aparigraha*—Non-acceptance.

It is India which has preserved the largest community of vegetarians. Vegetarianism means natural diet which entails no destruction of animal life. Again it is India where a large number of people does not smoke nor drink intoxicating drinks. The credit of leading a normal life perhaps goes back to Buddha's teachings which have been found translated into a people's life.

Hindu India reverentially remembers the Master for his edifying reforms in the country. The thinkers and the saints alike have, out of reverence, honoured him as an incarnation of God.

It was Vyasa, the celebrated author of the *Mahapurana* and *Bhagavatam* who has left an immortal song :

*Vedan uddharate jagan nivahate
bhugolam udbibhrate,
daityan darayate balim chalayate
kshatra kshayan kurvate,
paulastyan jayate halam kalayate
karunyam atanvate,
mlecchan murcchayate dashakrikrite
krishnaya tubhyam namah.*

'Who upheld the Vedas, supported the universe, bore up the world, destroyed the demons, outwitted Bali, broke the force of the Kshatriyas, conquered Ravan, used the plough, spread mercy, prevailed over aliens, homage to Krishna, who took these ten forms'.

This tradition of assigning Buddha a unique place in the ten incarnations was further enriched by Jaideva the author of celebrated book *Geetagoindam* in the thirteenth century. e.g.

*Nindasi yajnavidher ahaha shrutijalam,
sadaya hridaya darshita pashughatam
Keshava-dhirta Buddhasharira
jaya jagadishahare.*

'O you of merciful heart demounced the Vedas where slaughter of cattle is taught, O Keshava, you in the form of the Buddha, victory to you, Hari, lord of the world.'

Tulasidasa, the saint poet of Hindi in the 16th century has also made a moving reference in his *Vinayapatrika* to the Buddha as an incarnation of Vishnu. To quote the words :

*Prabalapakhandamahimandalakulitekhi
nindyakrita-akhilamakha karmajalam,
suddhabhoudhaikaghana jnanagunadhama,
aja Buddha avatara vande kripalam.*

'Having seen the world suffering from hypocrisy and indulging in ignoble bloody sacrifices Lord Buddha, an incarnation of compassion, reformed the society. I salute the Master who was an embodiment of enlightenment.'

This seems to be a paraphrase of the aforesaid Sanskrit verse. Hindus remember the Master through this unbroken tradition. His reverential place is evident in the caves of Ellora and Ajanta, myths and folk songs and largely in the way of life. The idea of compassion in Buddhism has helped the growth of the Bhakti cult in Hinduism. And Buddhism has worked as a sacred trust, which has been liquidated enriching the parent religion.

Its Nirguna sect of Bhakti preached the essence of their concepts. The worship of Trinity in Buddhism had come down to its followers. For instance seeking refuge in Triple gems (Tri-ratna) namely *Buddha*, *Dhamma* and *Samgha* gave their place to faith in the teacher, his teachings, and in the Satsamgha. Kabir, Nanak

and Tukaram, to name only a few, derived their inspiration from the ageless classics and preached them among the people. This led to a powerful movement of devotional culture which revitalised the minds of men crushed under the weight of intolerant alien rule. This provided a new life to the nation and the people captured the beauty and joys of life and the revival is visible in the treasured heritage.



It will not be out of place to quote Mahatma Gandhi another great man of the 20th century who has shown a synthesis between precept and practice. His every day life was an echo of the Buddha's gifts of compassion and non-violence. At one place the Mahatma writes :

'It is my definite opinion that the essential part of the teachings of the Buddha now forms an integral part of Hinduism. It is impossible for Hindu India today to retrace her steps and go behind the great reformation that Gautama Buddha effected in Hinduism. By his

great sacrifice, by his great renunciation and by his uncommon purity of life, he left an indelible impress upon Hinduism and Hinduism owes an eternal debt to that great teacher. He never rejected Hinduism but broadened its base. Gautama was the Hindu of Hindus. He was saturated with the spirit of Hinduism. What he did was therefore to introduce a living reformation in the petrified faith that surrounded him.'

Fairy Tales and Fables

India has been acknowledged as the home of fairy tales and fables in the world. The *Rigveda* has preserved stories of abiding wisdom, and creative beauty. India has also inspired the rest of the world to emulate this treasure. As stated elsewhere the most popular among these are the *Jatakas*, the recurrent birth stories of the Lord Buddha which were carried to foreign countries by Buddhist monks before Christ. These stories were ascribed to the Master which added a certain sanctity by identifying the best character in the story with Buddha himself in a previous birth. The two Chinese encyclopaedias dating back to 668 A.D. record a number of these tales rendered into Chinese and quote about two hundred Buddhist works as their sources. The *Panchatantra* is the finished form of these stories recast in the fifth century A.D. It was translated into Pehlvi in the sixth century A.D. and from Pehlvi into Arabic was rendered by Caliph Al Mensur (753-84 A.D.). The Arabic title '*Kalilah and Dimnah*' is still redolent of Sanskrit words

'*Kartak and Damnaka*'—the two Jackals who play the main role in the story. These ever-refreshing stories were translated into Persian, Syriac, Latin, Hebrew and Spanish. The same were translated and printed into German in 1481. In the 16th century these appeared in Italian, and from Italian into English, ultimately reached Shakespeare who used some of them as themes for his world famous plays. In Europe they were popular under the title-'The fables of Piplay' a corruption of Bidyapat or Vidya-pati, master of wisdom. La Fontaine, the celebrated French poet immortalised some of these fables with humour, grace and satire. Published in 1678, the writer has reverentially acknowledged his debt to Piplay in his preface :

'It is not necessary that I should say whence I have taken the subjects of these new fables. I should only say from a sense of gratitude that I owe the largest portion of them to the Indian Sage Piplay.'

The *Panchatantra* is technically known in Sanskrit literature as *Niti Shastra* or textbook of *Niti*. 'The word *Niti*', says Prof. Ryder, an eminent Sanskritist of America, 'means roughly the wise conduct of life. Western civilization must endure a certain shame in realizing



that no precise equivalent of the term is found in English, French, Latin, or Greek. Many words are therefore necessary to explain what *Niti* is, though the idea, once grasped, is clear, important, and satisfying.'

The Muslim attempt to emulate this style of writing under the title *The Arabian Nights Entertainments* records a poor performance according to the estimate of the experts. This is characterized by thinness in the frame-story and an open sex appeal. The perfection of the *Panchatantra* has been attested by numberless recensions, translations and translations of translations and its impact on the folktales. It therefore enjoys a unique position in world literature.

Like many European countries South-East Asia is no exception to the universal influence of Indian Fables. Laos has preserved a number of fables which are drawn from Indian sources. For instance, the fables entitled 'Like a Star' and 'The Golden Jar' are very popular in Luang Prabang province of Laos. These run as follows :

(1)

Once upon a time three friends went on a travel together. One day they lost their track in the forest. Till evening they could not make out their way. They were afraid as the

night was falling fast. At last they thought out a plan to sleep there head outwards and feet to feet in the shape of a star. At midnight an elephant happened to come there in search of a prey. He was terribly frightened to see a dreadful animal and rushed to his friend monkey to seek his guidance.

'I have seen an amazing animal. It has three separate heads and feet in the middle of its body' said the elephant to the monkey. 'Let me see this animal', replied the monkey.

Both of them went to the spot. The monkey looked at the body, but could not stand the terrifying look. So he too ran away proclaiming that what he saw must be a devil.

The wild animals in the forest were mortally afraid at the report of the monkey and they left the forest forthwith. Thus the three friends spent the night peacefully. Next morning they returned home safe and sound.

(2)

Once there were two friends in a country side. The first was generous, gentle and kind hearted. The other was rude, miser and ill-natured. They were born of poor parents. One day it so happened that a certain old man, tired and ill, knocked at his door and sought shelter. The good natured man immediately agreed and looked after him during the night.

At midnight the old man had a severe attack of stomatchache. The kind hearted man brought him a jar so that he could ease himself during the night. The good man covered the jar with a board. Next day he wanted to throw it. But the jar became so heavy that he could not lift it. He, out of surprise, took off the lid and found to his amazement that the jar was full of pieces of gold. He wanted to know the mystery of this change from the old man, but he had already disappeared. Later on it struck him that the old man must have been a genius. He thus became a man of fortune.

His friend was very jealous of him. One day the same old man visited him at night but his innate nature remained rude, miser and greedy. He, out of greed, placed two jars before him. Next day when the old man left him, he was very curious to test his fortune. To his great disappointment the jars of excrements did not change into gold.

Both these fables occur in the *Panchatantra* with a slight change here and a change there. The former is largely influenced by that of the smart jackal while the latter by that of the right mind and the wrong mind. The latter story is known under the title *Subuddhi and Kubuddhi*.



Lao Language

Language, Religion and Art are the most integrating forces and among them language has been found by far the most unifying factor in the world. Had there been no language the whole of the world would have been swept into darkness. Religion and Art find expression through language. All nations, therefore, develop their own language which is celebrated with the title 'National language'.

All countries in SE-Asia are influenced by two great nations, namely India and China. They have given mighty thought, philosophy and traditions. Laos, Thailand and Cambodia have been influenced by these two big countries. The first two languages are tonal and monosyllabic. Their mode of expression has been moulded by China. There is a close similarity in the construction of word and sentence between Lao and the Chinese languages. "Due to a long-standing intercourse, writes Prof. Phya Anuman Rajadhon, a celebrated authority on the South-East Asian languages and literatures, "between the Chinese and Thai (LAO), the two languages have acquired a tendency to

affinity in character." These languages represent one idea by one syllable, while in Indian as well as in European languages one idea is denoted by two, three, four or five syllables. Perhaps this point will be clear by examples :





| <i>English</i> | <i>Lao</i> |
|--------------------|------------|
| I) The horse comes | Ma maa |
| II) The dog goes | Maa pai |
| III) I eat | Khoy kin |
| IV) You sleep | Chau non |

In the aforesaid examples Lao language does not permit more than one syllable i.e. one consonant and one vowel:

The change in meaning is determined by change in vowels. One letter with different tones stands for many meanings. For example :

- I) Meu — hand.
- II) Ma — horse.
- III) Maa — dog.
- IV) Maaa — come.

Lao language has four signs to denote the tones and these are called :

- I) Maikan 
- II) Maikong 
- III) Maitho 
- IV) Mai Ek. 

If we compare them to English the difference is clear. The word horse has five letters as against one in Lao. In India this tendency was extant in Vedic times but later on this

feature disappeared due to the refashioning of the language called Sanskrit.

In Lao, Thai and Khamen languages there are about 60% words which are derived from Pali/Sanskrit. These words have been assimilated into these languages either from the original stock or by borrowings from each other. The following comparisons will make the point clear:

| <i>Pali/Sanskrit</i> | <i>Lao/Thai</i> |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| I) Nagar | Nakhon |
| II) Akshar | Aksoon |
| III) Nirvana | Niphaan |
| IV) Krodha | Kod |
| V) Rath | Lot |
| Vi) Sabha | Sapha |

Recently it has been proved that Lao/Thai language is spoken by a hilly tribe in the Eastern part of our country. Chao Supakha, the descendant of Thai kings, governed some portion of Assam in 1228 A.D. and his successors extended the Empire till the nineteenth century.

The arrangement of words in a sentence in Lao/Thai language is basically 'subject-action-object' with qualifying words adjectives and adverbs. There are no hard and fast rules about the parts of speech. A word may be noun, adjective, verb or adverb only in relation

to other words in a phrase or a sentence. The order of words is the most important in Thai and Lao languages e.g. :

- I) Khoy yakh vaau chaau – 'I wish speak you' (I wish to speak to you)
- II) Khon song khon chaa maa haa khao-
Man – Two men will come see him
(Two men will come to see him)
- III) Meuni mee bun khoy chaau tong maa
nai vela – (Today I have a feast,
You must come in time)

The literal translation of these sentences into English will convince the reader that the word order is the determining factor in understanding the sentences.

There are no complicated rules of grammar in tonal languages. These languages are easy, simple and harmonious. There are no hard and fast rules of declensions nor those of conjugations. To illustrate the point :

- I) I am (Khoy pen)
- II) You are (Chaa pen)
- III) He or she is (Man pen)

There is no singular, no plural, nor gender in verbs, nouns and pronouns. In English and French there are declensions of nouns and pronouns e.g. I, me, my. Lao, on the other hand, knows no declensions, e.g. Khoy (I) Khoy (me) Khong Khoy (My).

So far as conjugations are concerned, there

are no past or past perfect tenses. The past is denoted by the particle 'leyo' which literally means 'past'. The word 'leyo' is another name for the goddess of grammar which solves all problems of the past tense. The word 'leyo' always follows the verb and it means past tense. e.g.

- I) Khoy hiyan leyo --- I have learnt.
- II) Khoy pai leyo — I have gone.
- III) Khoy non leyo — I have slept.
- IV) Khoy Khiyan leyo — I have written.

There is another particle 'daai' which is used to denote past tense. It is used before the verb, e.g.

- I) Khoy daai hiyan — I have learnt.
- II) Khoy daai pai — I have gone.
- III) Khoy daai non — I have slept.
- IV) Khoy daai khiyan — I have written.

For present continuous tense another particle is used namely 'kamlaang'

- I) Khoy kamlaang hiyan — I am learning.
- II) Khoy kamlaang khiyan — I am writing.
- III) Khoy kamlaang kin — I am eating.
- IV) Khoy kamlaang naang — I am sitting.

Similarly, two particles are used to denote future tense namely 'chaa' and 'Sec' e.g.

- I) Khoy chaa hen — I shall see.
- II) Khoy chaa non — I shall sleep.
- III) Khoy see pai — I shall go.
- IV) Khoy see hiyan — I shall learn.

V) Khoy chaa kin — I shall eat.

For comparative and superlative degrees Lao language has specific words for expression, e.g.

I) Bigger — yai kwa; Better—dee kwa.

II) Biggest — yai teesud; Best—dee teesud.
For negative sense mostly the particle 'Bo' is used before the words, e.g. Bo mee—I don't have.

Bo daai — It is not proper. (Compare Bemuraad and Bakarar where Be preposition in Hindi is similar to Bo in Lao)

The following three sentences are frequently used at the initial stage of learning Lao.

I) Mee yang — What is the matter ?

II) Seu yang — What is the name ?

III) Vaau yang — What do you say ?

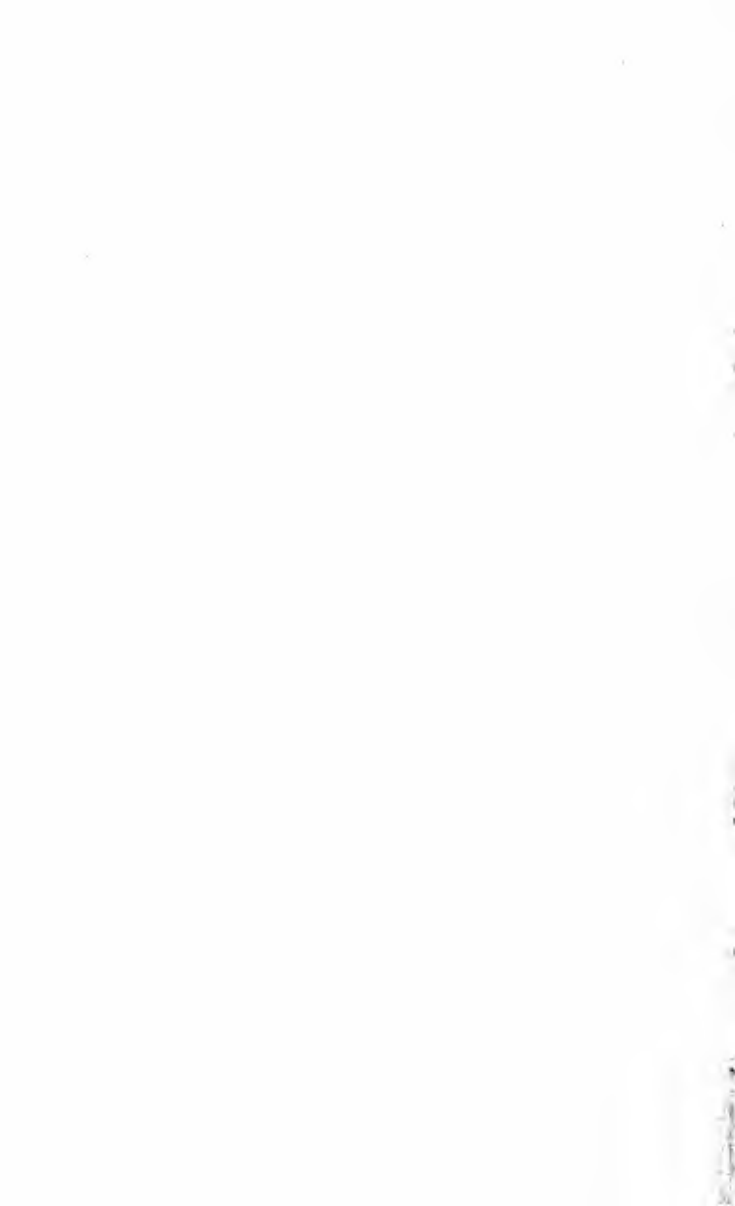
With the help of these key sentences a beginner can converse with another person.

The Lao/Thai language has three types of words i.e. for the masses, for the princes and for the monks. The princes as well as the monks use Sanskrit/Pali words which contain a common and unifying material for their expression. The monks can make themselves understood by the use of Sanskrit vocabulary when they go to another country. Some of them with the gift of Sanskrit find no difficulty during their travels in India.

It is interesting to note the influence of Sanskrit and its literature. Its impact is most

evident in these parts. Sanskrit has indeed enriched the language, culture and traditions; nay, it has given an unbroken continuity which Sardar Panikkar has aptly described as 'one of the marvels of history'. It has fertilised the minds of many Asian countries who continued to draw their inspiration and common idiom of life from it generation after generation.

It seems that our forefathers have been generous and the gentle conquest of righteousness with its elevating and refining social effects on these countries has perhaps no parallel in the history of world civilization. In spite of the forced conversion to Islam, the beauty of Indian culture thrives in their customs, myths, traditions, scriptures, architecture and literature like the immortal splendour that often lives between the lines of a great poem.



Lao Literature

It is the magnificent glory of great literature that it lasts longer than kings and dynasties. History bears witness to the power of human spirit which endures longer than kings or creeds. The political world of Valmiki and Vyasa is dead while their songs are still living in the world.

In ancient times the people of Laos worshipped the spirits. Generally speaking animism was the cult in all its forms. Here is an instance of a magical incantation :

‘Om Oh white herb !

I use the talisman of the white Angel !

Om Sathatheti !

Om I invoke the power of Pha in !

I invoke the power of Pha-Prom !

I invoke the power of the infernal spirits !

Om Maha saming !

I invoke the Great Genius of living beings !

Such songs and incantations of healers constitute the first stage of Laotian literature.

Laotian life echoes songs. The Laotian sings when he leads his herds of buffaloes down to the rice fields and sings on the threshold of his straw-hut when the night has fallen.

In the mediaeval times the ancient stock of Laotian folklore gave place to the folklore of India. Buddhism penetrated into this region in the 13th century A.D. And with this faith came new themes and subjects of prosody. The poetry of Laos received greater vitality of expression. As said earlier, most of the tales owe their origin to the Sanskrit work *Panchatantra*. This book has travelled by itself throughout the world, and yet the impact is deep and universal. There is a translation of this classic into Lao language preserved in Wat phra Keyo in Vientiane. The story of the Bald Man who was poisoned by Mushrooms is a burlesque tale. Similarly Brother-seven Jars is a sort of Laotian Gargantua who devours seven jars of rice a day. He is the hero of a comic 'jest' written in somewhat archaic verse and full of exploits that are out and out grotesque. There are satires on the monks lacking discipline and the artlessness among peasants.

However, the religious literature is the richest. Canonical literature is Buddhist in spirit and character. This includes speeches, disciplines and dogmatics (*Sutta*, *Vinaya* and *Abhidhamma*). The Jatakas are a collection

of brilliant accounts of the former lives of Gautama the Buddha which forms the core of the Buddhist literature of Laos. The authors of these tales have tried to depict the childhood of the Master full of fun, practical wisdom and incidents taken from the lives of the people. These serve as flashes throwing light on the old Indian panorama of bazar and caravan, farmyard and barracks. The collection contains about 550 Jatakas. Of the last ten the Vassantara is the richest in sermons and metaphors used profusely in sermons as well as in frescoes on monastery walls.

The Paritta or Mantta or Mantra are magical formulae usually in Pali verses. There is a strong belief that the recitation of these formulae help in averting dangers, illness, want and the like. There are also formulae from the Suttas which seek the help of gods and genii who rule the forces of Nature. Though the role of gods in Buddhism is secondary yet Impenge (Indra) holds an important place in the domain of literature in which he is considered to be a sort of Providence. In Vedic literature too, the place of Indra is very outstanding. He is glorified as the incarnation of strength, and later on in the *Ramayana*, the character of Hanuman takes his place. He is said to be the son of *Vayu* (Wind). There are a number of Jatakas woven around him, namely, the story of Indra

questioning the hare, Indra roams the world, Question of Indra, Indra commands the stars to fall.

The stories on Buddha's relics are also very popular. The tales of the lives of the saints make a greater appeal to the imagination of the masses. The benevolence of Rishis-hermits-magicians carries a great appeal.

There are novels to propagate the values of Buddhism written in Tham e.g. *Champa Siton*, *Bouddhasen* and *Usaparot*. The secular literature is marked by the novels namely *Kalabet*, *Lin Thong*, *Teng On*, *Surivong*, *Thao Be* and *Sin Xay*. These contain stories of adventure with a wide appeal. The reading of these novels creates an uncommon joy and romance among the people of Laos. The hero is depicted as a person of courage, who is generally a prince who descends on earth with all powers of Bodhisattva. Indra often intervenes to help the hero. The coquetry of the Kinnaris as dancing girls of uncommon beauty is introduced to create a sense of romance among the readers. Similarly the violence and voracity of the Yakshas permit them to fly through the air. There is benevolence of a Rishi, a hermit, a magician, who transmits to the hero his own knowledge of the occult science. This enables him to fly through the air and he fights successfully with magic arms. The faithfulness of the heroine

who is gifted with inner strength always saves the lover.

These features can easily be compared to those in our Sanskrit novels as well as dramas especially the dramatic pieces of Kalidasa where the roles of Indra, Gandharvas and Rishis is remarkably similar. The introduction of these features in Lao literature seems to be directly or indirectly influenced by the Buddhist plays like the *Sariputraprakarana* of Ashvaghosha, and the *Nagananda* of Harsha.

The script of the literature of these South-East Asian countries is derived from India. The edicts of Ashok have been the greatest inspiration. The late professor F. Martini has proved by his indefatigable researches this view. 'Like Siamese, Cambodian, and Burmese,' writes he, 'Laotian is written in characters borrowed from India'. The kinship between these languages is obvious at a glance. This is shown clearly in the following transcriptions of the syllables Ka and Lu in each of these different languages :

| | Sanskrit | Cambodian | Siamese | Laotian | Burmese |
|----|----------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|
| Kā | का | 𑓖 | 𑓖 | 𑓖 | 𑓖 |
| Lu | लु | 𑓗 | 𑓗 | 𑓗 | 𑓗 |

There is no doubt that the influence of India on these parts is unmistakable. Her conquest

of righteousness (Dhamajaya) has been a shining example in the history of the world civilization. Some of the noblest thoughts are worth quoting :

*Bahitapapo ti brahmano,
samacariya samano ti vuccatti.
pabbajay' attano malam,
tasma pabbajito' ti vuccati.¹*

Because he has discarded evil, he is called a "Brahmana". Because his conduct is balanced, he is called a "Samana". Since he has renounced his impurities, he is, therefore, called a recluse.

And,

*Na jatahi na gottena
na jacca hoti brahmano
yamhi saccan ca dhammo ca
so suci so ca brahmano.²*

Not by platted hair, nor by family, nor by birth does one become a Brahmana. But in whom there exist both Truth and Righteousness, pure is he, a Brahmana is he.

1. बाहितपापोऽति ब्राह्मणो

समचरिया समणोति वुच्चति ।

पब्बाजय् धत्तनो मलं

तस्मा पब्बजितोऽति वुच्चति ॥ (388)

2. न जटाहि न गोत्तेन

न जच्चा होति ब्राह्मणो ।

यं हि सच्चक्खं च धम्मो च

सो सुची सो च ब्राह्मणो ॥ (393)

**BASIC
LAO VOCABULARY**



| | | |
|--|--|----------------------------------|
| A | | Alone—Andio (for arti- cles) |
| A—Ann, Neung | | Pudio (for persons) |
| About—Kiap, Kio Kap | | Already—Leyo Leyo |
| Abroad—Tang Pathet | | Leyo |
| (<i>Skt Pradesh</i>) | | Alright—Theuk Leyo |
| Accident—Upbati, Ant- ray (<i>Skt Antaraya</i>) | | Always—Liai, Sameu |
| Ache—Chep, Puat | | Ambassador—Thoot |
| (<i>Skt Peeda</i>) | | Ekakkharaj athoot |
| Address—Thee yoo | | (<i>Skt Rajdoot</i>) |
| sthanithi | | And—Lai, |
| (<i>Skt Sthan</i>) | | Anger—Khiat, Kod |
| Advice—Tueun, nenam | | (<i>Skt Krodh</i>) |
| Aerodrome—Sanambin, | | Animal—Sat |
| (<i>Skt Shunyam</i>) | | (<i>Skt Satva</i>) |
| [Compare also Akasyan] | | Answer—Top |
| Afraid—Yaan, Kua | | Any—Phuneung Khao |
| After—Langchak | | April—Mesayon, Mesæ |
| Afternoon—Tonbai | | (<i>Skt Meshyoni</i>) |
| Again—Eek. | | Are—Pen Maen, Yoo |
| Age—Ayu | | Arm—Khaen |
| (<i>Skt Ayu</i>) | | Army—Kongthap |
| Air—Akad | | Thahan |
| (<i>Skt Aakash</i>) | | (<i>Skt Dahar</i>) |
| All—Thang Mot | | Ask—Tham-Kho |
| All day—Mot meu, Mot | | August—Singhakhom |
| van, Talod van | | (<i>Simharashi</i>) |
| (<i>Skt Var</i>) | | Aunt—Paa (Father's sister) |
| Almost—Keuap | | |

Aunt—Naa (Mother's
sister)

B

Back—Thang lang, Lang

Bad—Bowdi, Sua

Bag—Kapao, Thong

Ball—Baan, Maak

Bank—Thaanaa-Khaan
(*Skt Dhanagar*)

Bank Notes—Thaanaa

Bat (*Skt Parna*)

Barber—Saang Tat
Phom

Bath-room—Aabnaam
(*Skt Aap*)

Battery—Maw Faai,
Thaan Faai

Be able to—Daai

Beans—Mak Thuaa

Beautiful—Ngam, Chop
(*Skt Anang*)

Because—Phawvaa

Bed—Tiang Nawn,

Bed-room—Hang

Before—Kawn

Bench—Penmaa, Maa-
nang

Best—Dee Thee Sut

(*Skt Susthu*)

Better—Dee Kuaa

Black—Dam, Lae

Blood—Leuat

(*Skt Lohitam*)

Blue—See Faa

Boil—Tom

Book—Peum, Nangseu

Book-seller—Khon Khai
Peum

Borrow—Khoyeem,
Yeem

Boss—Hua Naa

Box—Sop, Heep

Boy—Dek Sai, Phusai

Bread—Khao Chee

Breakfast—Ahaan Sao

Pan Khao Sao,

(*Skt Ahara-shvah*)

Bring—Nam Maa, Aao
Maa

Broadcasting Station—
Sathanee Vithayu

(*Skt Sthaniya Vidyut*)

Brother (Elder)—Aay

(*Skt Arya*)

Brother (Younger)—

Nong Sai

C

Cake—Khanom Khek

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Call - Eun | Coat - Seuá, |
| Can - Saamaat | Coconut - Maakh Phaaó |
| (<i>Skt Samarth</i>) | Coffee - Kaafe |
| Cannot - Bo saamaat, | Cold - Jen |
| Bodaai | Come - Maa |
| Candle - Thian Khai | Comb - Wee |
| Car - Lot (<i>Skt Rath</i>) | Cook - Khon Khua Kin |
| Carpenter - Saang Mai | Cool - Jen Dee |
| Carry - Theu, Baek | Cost - Raakhaa, Laakhaa |
| Cat - Menyon | (<i>Skt Laksha</i>) |
| Chair - Tangee, Kaoee | Country - Baan Nok |
| Chalk - So Khaao | Cow - Ngua |
| Change - Laekh-Pian | Cream - Karaem |
| Cheap - Rakha Thecukh | |
| Cheese - Noye Khaeng | D |
| Cheque - Cheq | Daily - Pa Cham Wan |
| Chicken - Kaai | Daily - Nang seu Phim |
| Child - Look | (Newspaper) |
| Children - Deknoi | Dance - Kan Fonlam, |
| Chinese - Chek | Ten Lam |
| Cigar - Ya Ciga, Yaa | Danger - Antarai |
| Doud Kok yaa | (<i>Skt Antaraya</i>) |
| Clean - Sa Ad, Sed | Dark room - Hawng Meut |
| Clerk - Samian | Daughter - Louk Sao |
| Clock - Mong, Nalika | (<i>Skt jaya</i>) |
| Close - Ad | Daughter - Louk Phai |
| Cloth - Seuá, Phaa | in-law |
| Cloud - Mekh | Date - Wanthee (<i>Skt Tithi</i>) |
| (<i>Skt Megha</i>) | Day - Wan, Meu |
| Coal - Thaan Fai | (<i>Skt Var, Muhurta</i>) |

| | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| Dear—Phaeng, Hak | Dozen—Lo |
| Deep—Leukh | Drama—Bod Lakhon |
| Defeated—Bo, Phe, Siya | Lakhon |
| Delicious—Saeb | Dress—Kheuyang nung |
| Delighted—Seeb, Yindee | Dress-maker—Sang Tad |
| Dentist—Mo Pua Kheo | Kheuyang |
| Department—Kosuang | Drink—Deum, Kin |
| (<i>Skt Karya</i>) | Drive—Khap Rot |
| Desert—Don Xaylay leng | (<i>Skt Rath</i>) |
| Destination—Chut Maai | Driver—Khod Khan Rot |

Paai Thawng

Develop—Laang Hoop

E

(*Skt Roop*)

Diamond—Phed

Die—Taay

Digest—Yawnyi

Dinner—Aahaan ahan

Laeng, Khao Laeng

(*Skt Ahar*)

Dirty—Peuan

Dish—Hong Saam

Disturb—Kuk Kuan

Doctor—Nai Mo, Than

Mo

(*Skt nayak*) (*Skt mula-*

root expert)

Dog—Maa

Do not—Yaa, Bo

Door—Baan, Patu

Down—Lum, Long

Ear—Hoo

Ear-ring—Tum Hoo

Earn—Die ngan

Eat—Kin

Education—Seuksaa

Thin Kaan

(*Skt Shikshadhikarya*)

Egg—Khai

Eight—Paed

Eighteen—Sip Paed

Eighty—Paed Sip

Eighty-one—Paed Sip Et

Eighty-two—Paed Sip

Sawng

Eighty-three—Paed Sip

Saam

Eighty-four—Paed Sip

See

| | | |
|----------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|
| Eighty-five - Paed | Sip | Eye—Taa |
| Haa | | |
| Eighty-six - Paed | SipHok | F |
| Eighty-seven - Paed | Sip | Family—Khawp Khua |
| Chet | | Fast—Wai |
| Eighty-eight - Paed | Sip | Father—Pho, Bida |
| Paed | | (<i>Skt Pita</i>) |
| Eighty-nine - Paed | Sip | Fever—Khayī |
| Kao | | Feet—Teen |
| Electric fan - Phad | Lom | Fifteen - Sip Haa |
| Eleven - Sip-Et | | Fifty - Haa Sip |
| Embassy - Sathan Thoot | | Fifty-one—Haa Sip Et |
| (<i>Skt Sthan Doot</i>) | | Fifty-two—Haa Sip |
| Empty—Waang, Pao | | Sawng |
| End—Chop, Mot, Thai | | Fifty-three—Haa Sip |
| Enemy - Sattu, Khaa | | Saam |
| Senk (<i>Skt Shatru</i>) | | Fifty-four—Haa Sip See |
| English - Ankit, Phasa | | Fifty-five—Haa Sip Haa |
| Ankit | | Fifty-Six—Haa Sip Hok |
| Enjoy - Muan, dee chai | | Fifty-seven—Haa Sip |
| Enough—Phaw | | Chet |
| European - Khon Tawan | | Fifty-eight—Haa Sip |
| Tok | | Paed |
| Evening - Mul aeng, | | Fifty-nine - Haa Sip Kao |
| Laeng | | Fine—Chop, Ngam, Saat |
| Evening market—Talat | | Fish—Paa (<i>Skt Plu</i>) |
| Laeng | | Flag—Thung |
| Expensive—Phaeng | | Flesh—Sot, Sin sot |
| Explain—athibay | | Flower—Dok Mai |
| (<i>Skt Arthapaya</i>) | | Food—Ahaan, Khao |

| | |
|--|--|
| Foreign—Taang Pathet (<i>Skt Pradesh</i>) | Get—Dai Rap |
| Forty—See Sip | Girl—Deksao Phuying, Dekying |
| Forty one—See Sip Et | Give—Phaw, Hnayi |
| Forty two—See Sip Sawng | Go—Pai |
| Forty three—See Sip Saam | Gold—Kham |
| Forty four—See Sip See | Good—Dee, Chop (<i>Skt Dishtom</i>) |
| Forty Five—See Sip Haa | Good-Evening—Sayan |
| Forty six—See Sip Hok | Sawat, Meu leng (<i>Skt Saayam</i>) |
| Forty seven—See Sip Chet | Good-Morning—Aruna Sawat, Meu Sao |
| Forty eight—See Sip Paed | Grand-Daughter—Laan Sao (<i>Skt Jata</i>) |
| Forty nine—See Sip Kao | Grand-Father—Poo |
| Four—See | Photoo |
| Fresh—Sot (<i>Skt Srot</i>) | Grand-Mother—Mae, Yna, Mehtoo |
| Fresh milk—Hom Sot | Grape—Angun |
| Friday—Wan Sukh (<i>Skt Shukrawar</i>) | Green—Seekhiao, Khiao |
| Fruit—Makhmai | Green Vegetable—Phak Sot (<i>Skt Srota</i>) |
| Fruit Juice—Nam Makh- mai | Gum—Yaang Yang-Kaao |

G

| |
|--------------------------------|
| Game—Kila (<i>Skt Krida</i>) |
| Gardner—Khon Het Suan |
| Gem—Phet Phoi |

H

| |
|------------------------------|
| Hair—Phom, Khon |
| Hair Cutter—Khon Tad Phom |

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Hair Dresser—Saang | Husband—Phua, Sami |
| Tad Phom | |
| Half—Kheung | I |
| Hand—Meu | I --- Khoy, Khanoy |
| Happy—Sanuk, Dee | Ice—Naam Kon |
| chai | Iced—Yen |
| Has—Mee | If—Thaah Waa |
| Head—Hua | Ill—Bow Saabaai, |
| Head-Ache—Chep Hua | Puaey, Chep |
| Health—Somboon | Immigration Office— |
| Heart—Hua Chai | Kawng Tang Daao |
| Heavy—Nak | In—Naai |
| Here—Bonnee, Nee | Inch—Niew |
| High—Soong | Indian—Khon India |
| Home—Hueun, Bann | Industries—Ut Saa Haa |
| Horse—Maa | Kam |
| Hospital—Hong Phayaa | Ink—Nam Meukh |
| Baan, Hong mo | Inside—Thaang/Khaang |
| Hot—Hawn, Phet | Naai |
| Hot water—Nam Hawn | Internal—Phaai Naai |
| Hour—Sua, Mong | Phthet |
| How—Chang Daai, | (Skt Pradesh) |
| Yang Daai | Irritating—Khiat |
| How Many—Thao Daai | Iron (Press)—Taaoo heet, |
| Hundred—Loy, Hoy | Is—Pen, Yu, Maen |
| Hundred and one kips- | It—Man, Khawng Man |
| Loy/Hoy Neung Kip | Itching—Khan |
| Hundred Thousand— | |
| Loy/Hoy Phan | J |
| Hungry—Hieu Khaao | January—Mokrakhom |

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Letter—Nang seu | Maid—Khon sai |
| Lie—Tua | Man—Phusai |
| Light—Fai | (<i>Skt Pumun</i>) |
| Lion—Sing (<i>Skt Simha</i>) | Mango—Mak uang |
| Listen—Fang | Many—Lai |
| Lip—Sop | Map—Phen thee |
| Little while—Chak noi | March—Meena Khom |
| Live—Aasai | March—Pai (<i>Skt Pad</i>) |
| Liver—Tap | Market—Talad |
| Lo—Beung | Marrige—Taingan |
| Local—Thang thin | Vivaha (<i>Skt Vivaha</i>) |
| Lock—Kunche | Massage—Nuat, khan |
| (<i>Skt Kunchika</i>) | Match Box—Kap fai |
| Long—Ynao | May—Pritsapha khom |
| Look—Beung | (<i>Skt Vrishabha</i>) |
| Looking glass—Keyo | May—Anuyat (verb) |
| Lost—Siya leyo | (<i>Skt Anujna</i>) |
| Lot of—Lai lai, mak | Me—Khoy |
| maak | Meal—Aahaan Khuang |
| Love—Hak | Kin-Khong (<i>Skt Ahara</i>) |
| Lover—Soo | Meat—Seen |
| Luk—Sok | Medicine—Ya |
| Luggage—Khuong deun | Meet—Phop |
| thang | Milk—Mak taing mo |
| Lunch—Aahaan | Mend—Paeng, Samruat, |
| (<i>Skt Aahaar</i>) | Merchant—Saithi (<i>Seth</i>) |
| | Midday—Thiang van |
| M | Mid night—Thiang kang |
| Madam—Madam Yna | kheun |
| men | Milk—Nam nom |

| | |
|---|--|
| Milk condensed—Nam Khon Kapong | (In Lao words pertaining to time the base meu is possibly derived from <i>Sanskrit</i> word 'muhurta') |
| Milk fresh—Nam sot | |
| Mine—Hilohaghad (<i>Skt Lohakhana</i>) | |
| Mine (Pronoun)—Khong khoy | Morning market—Talad sao |
| Minister—Rath mon-three (<i>Skt Rathmantree</i>) | Mosquito—Nyoung |
| Ministry—Kasuang | Mother—Mae (<i>Skt mata</i>) |
| Minute—Nathee | Moustache—Nuat |
| Mirror—Wean eyaeng | Mouth—Pak Sob |
| Miss—Nang sao | Mr.—Nai (<i>Skt Naayak</i>) |
| Mistaken—Phit, Botheuk | Mrs.—Nang |
| Modren—Samai mai (<i>Skt Samaya</i>) | Much—Lai |
| Monday—Van Chan (<i>Skt Chandravar</i>) | Mud—Kheetom |
| Money—Nageun | Music—Donthree (<i>Skt Tantree</i>) |
| Monk—Khooba, CaoHua (<i>Skt Guru</i>) | Must—Tong |
| Monkey—Leeng | N |
| Monument—Anusavaree (<i>Skt Anushavana</i>) | Nail—Lek, Tapoo |
| Month—Deuan | Name—Seu |
| Monthly—Thuk deuen | Narrow—Khaep |
| Moon—Deuan | National defence—Powng kan pathet |
| More—Eck | National Library—Hong samut (samudra) hang sad (<i>Skt jan</i>) |
| Morning—Meusao | Native—Ban keut |

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Near--Kayi, Mo | Novice Doinee Luksit |
| Neck--Khaw | Number - Lekthee |
| Need -Tawng kan | Nun - Mey Khao |
| (<i>Skt Kary</i>) | Nurse--Nang mo |
| Needle--Khem | Nursing Home - Hong |
| Nephew--Lan sai | Phanya ban |
| Never--Bo, khaye | |
| New--Mayi | O |
| News--Khao | O'Clock - Mong |
| Newspaper--Nang seu | October - Tula Khom |
| phim | (<i>Skt Tula rashi</i>) |
| Next--Topai Thong-na | Of - Khong, Haing |
| Niece--Lan sao | Offer--Thavay Aohay |
| Night--Kang kheun | Official--Rasakan Thang |
| Nine--Kao | Rosakan (<i>Skt Rajakarya</i>) |
| Nineteen hundred Sixty | Officer--Chaunathi |
| eight--Phan kao loy | Often - Lelai |
| hok sip paed | Old person--Kao, Thao |
| Ninety--Kao sip | On--Bon, Thang |
| Nipple - Hua nom | One--Neung |
| Noise--Siang dang | One hundred--Loy |
| North--Neua | Neung |
| Nose--Dang | One thousand - Phang |
| Nostrils--Hoo dang | Neung |
| Not--Bodai, Boman | Onion--Phakbua |
| Not (go)--Yapai | Only - Thao nun |
| Nothing--Bomee yang | Open--Khayai, Peut |
| Novel--Navanee yai | Or - Leu |
| November--Phitsajika | Orange Mak kiang |
| (<i>Skt Vrishchikyon</i>) | Orchestra - Vong Don- |

| | |
|--|---|
| tree (<i>Skt Tantree vansh</i>) | Picture—Hoop (<i>Skt Roop</i>) |
| Ox—Ngua phu. | Piece—(Bread)—Khao- chee |
| P | Pig—Moo |
| Pain—Chep | Pigeon—Nok kang kae |
| Pair—Khoo | Pillow—Maun |
| Palace—Phrarasavang (<i>Skt Pra raja Vansh</i>) | Pills—Ya met |
| Papaya—Makhoong | Pineapple—Mak nat |
| Paper—Chia | Place—Sthan, Thee. (<i>Skt Sthan</i>) |
| Parcel—Haw Kheung | Play—Leayng, Lakhaun, Lin (Verb) |
| Pardon—Khot hot | Please—Seun (<i>Skt Karnna</i>) |
| Parents—Pho mae | Pleased—Yindee. |
| Park—Suvan Satharana (<i>Skt Suvan Sadharana</i>) | P.M.—Lang Chak tiang. |
| Party—Kaan kin Liang | Police—Tamruat |
| Party—Phak kan mea- ung. | Police Station—Sthane Tamruat |
| Pastry—Khanom. | Polish—Phat, Set |
| Pay—Chai ngeun | Poor—Thuk yak |
| Peas—Makthua. | Pork—Sin moo |
| Pen—Pakka | Porter—Khon Khon khawng |
| Pencil—Sau dam | Postbox—Too Paisanee (<i>Skt Purush Prayasneeya</i>) |
| People—Khon, Passason (<i>Skt Prajajana</i>) | Post Office—Krom Paisnee |
| Perfume—Nam hom | Potato—Man frang. |
| Perspire—Heua auk | |
| Petrol—Naman | |
| Pharmacy—Hang Khaiya | |

Powder—Khao paeng.

Power station—Hong Fai
Fa Quarter of hour—Sip ha
nathee

Pray—Suat mon Vaypha Queen—Phra Rasini Ma-

Prayer—Kan sut mon hesi (*Skt Vara Rajni*. In

Prefer—Mak lai Lav and Thai languages

Prescription—Bai sang all words used in con-
ya. nection with Royal per-

Pretty—Ngam. sonage and their limbs

Price—Rakha, of the body must be

Lakha prefaced with the

Priest—Phra Khooba Sanskrit word 'Vara'

(Skt Guru) (Pra) meaning great.

Prime minister—Naiyok The status of monks

Rathamanthree. is much superior to

Print—Phim, At Royal persons. The

hoop names of monks are

Printer—Sang Phim embellished with two

Programme—Lai kan words namely 'Phra,

Protocol—Phithee kan Maha')

Thoot

Public health—Sukh

R

Satharana (*Skt Sukh*) Race course—Sanam meu.

Public works—Yotha Radio set—Vithyu

thikan (*Skt Vidyut*.)

Publicity—Khosana kan Railway station—Sthane

(Skt Goshana karya) Rot fai

Pulses—Mak thua Rain—Fon,—Fontok

Pupil—Looksit (to rain—Fontok)

Put into—Ao sai Nai Rain coat—Seua Fon Tok

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Rainy season—Radoofon | Robe—Pha |
| (Skt Ritu) | Roll—Kaw Ham |
| Raise—yokh | Room—Hoang |
| Rat—Noo | Rope—Siak |
| Raw—Dip | Rose—Dawk kulab |
| Razor—Meet Thai | Row—Theyo |
| Razor blade—Bai meet | Rubber—Yang lop |
| thal | Run—Laen |
| Read—Aan | |
| Receipt—Dai rup | S |
| Red—See daeng | Sad—Sia chai |
| Red cross—Sabha ka sat | Salesman—Khon khai |
| Registered—Long Thabian | khong |
| Repeat—Vau eek | Saleswoman—Ying khai |
| Request—Kha | khong |
| Reserve—Chawng | Salt—keua |
| Reserve seat—Thee nang | Same—Kheukan, meun- |
| Restaurant—Han, Han | kan |
| ahan | Saturday—Van sao |
| Return—Peepai kap ticket | (Skt Shanivar) |
| Rice—Khao | Sauce—Maksom |
| Rickshaw—Samlow | Say—vau |
| Rich—Hang mee | Scarf—Pha phan khaw |
| Right—Khang, Thang, | Scene—Sak |
| Khua | School—Honghien |
| Ring—Waen | Science—Vithyasat |
| Ripe—Suk | (Skt Vidhya Shastra) |
| Road—Thanon | Scissor—Meet Tat, Sam |
| Robber—Khon khi lak | Screen—Pha kang sain- |
| Khamoy | ang |

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Sea—Thale Nomthale | Shirt—Seua |
| Seaside—Saithale | Shoe—Keup |
| Khamthal | Shoelaces—Sai keup |
| Season—Radoo (<i>Skt Ritu</i>) | Shoe maker—Sang keup |
| Seat—Theenang | Shoe polish—Ya phat |
| Second—Vinathee | keup |
| Secondhand—Khong kao | Shop—Han Ran |
| Secretary—Lekhanukan | (<i>Skt Hat</i>) |
| (<i>Skt Lekhanukary</i>) | Shopping—Kan seu |
| Section—Phaneukh | khong |
| See—Hen, Beung | Short—San |
| Selfish—Khee thee | Shoulders—Ba Lai |
| Sell—khai | Show—Sadaeng |
| Seller—Khon khai | Show (Verb) — Bokh, |
| Sentence—Payog | Aao hai Beung |
| (<i>Skt Prayog</i>) | Sick—Bo sabai, chep |
| Sentiment—Khuam hoo | (<i>Skt Svasti</i>) |
| suck | Sight-seeing—Kan som |
| September—Kanyayon | Silver—Ngan |
| (<i>Skt Kanyayoni</i>) | Singer—Molan |
| Serious—Nak | Sir—Khanoi, khap |
| Serpent—Gnoo | Sister (elder)—Iyai |
| Servant—Khon sai | (<i>Skt Aryaa</i>) |
| Seven—Chet | Sister (younger)—Nang sao |
| Several—Lai | Sister-in-law—Iyai Phai |
| Shall—Chaa | Sit—Nang |
| Shave—Thae | Sit down—Nang long |
| Shaving soap—Saboo | Six—Hok |
| thae nuat | Sixteen—Sip hok |
| She—Khao, Man, Nong | Sixty one—Hok sip et, |

| | |
|---|--|
| Size—Khanat | Speak—Vau, Pak |
| Skin—Nang | Special—Phised Tang Hak |
| Sleep—Nawn | Spectacle—Waen taa |
| Sleepy—Nguangnawn | Speed limit—Attrakhu- am vai |
| Slip—Meun | Spent time—Sai vela |
| Slipper—Keup tae | Spoon—Buang |
| Slowly—Sa sa | Stage—Wethee, son (<i>Skt Veditjan</i>) |
| Small—No | Staircase—Khandai |
| Smile—neem | Stamp—Staem |
| Smoke of fire—Khuan Fai | Stand—Jieun |
| Snake—Ngoo | Stand up—Jieun kheun |
| So—Dangnan | Start—Reum Leum |
| So far—Den leo | Station master—Phu kam kap Sthanee |
| Soap—Saboo | Stay—Phak yu |
| Socks—Thong Thao san | Steal—Lak |
| Soda—Nam soda | Steel—Lek ka |
| Soldier—Thahan (<i>Skt dahara</i>) | Step daughter—Luk liang |
| Same—Khikan | Step father—Phau liang |
| Something—Bangyang | Step mother—Me liang |
| Son—Luksay | Stomach—Thaung |
| Son-in-law—Luk Kheui | Stone—Heen |
| Song—Pheung | Stop—yut |
| Soon—Bosa, Dyuni | Story—Leung, Nithan |
| Soup—Kaeng | Straight—Seu |
| Sour—Som | Street—Thanon |
| South—Tai | Student—Luksit |
| Southern—Phak tai | Study—Hieun |
| Sparrow—Nok khaek | |

| | |
|--|--|
| Suck—Doot | Taxi—Rot, Lot Taxi |
| Sugar—Namtan | Tea—Sa, Namsa |
| Sugarcane—Awye | Teacher—Khoo, Naik- hoo (<i>Skt Guru</i>) |
| Summary—Salup leaung (<i>Skt Svarup</i>) | Technicolour—See Thek Neek |
| Sun—Phraathit, Taven (<i>Skt Pra Aditya, Tapan</i>) | Teeth—Kheo |
| Sunday—Vanaathit (<i>Skt Adityavar</i>) | Tell—Bokh |
| Sunshine—Song saing | Temple—Wat |
| Supper—Ahan veng | Telephone—Thorasab (<i>Skt DoorShabd</i>) |
| Suppose—Kha Va | Ten—Sip |
| Survey—Truvat doo | Thank you—Khop Chai (<i>Skt Garv Chit</i>) |
| Suspend—Phak | That—Nan, Va |
| Swallow—Keun | That one—Khon nan, Annan |
| Swan—Nok hong | Theatre—Hong Lakhon (<i>Skt Ranga</i>) |
| Sweat—Heua | Their—Khong Khao |
| Sweet—Van | Then—Leo, Topai |
| Switch—Savit Fai Fa | There—Thinan, Baun haun |
| Swollen—Buam Khaeu | There is—Mee |
| | They—Man, Khao |
| | Thick—Na |
| | Thief—Khon Khee Lak, Chon (<i>Skt Chor</i>) |
| | Thin—Choi, Bang |
| | Think—Khitva, Khit |

T

| |
|------------------------------|
| Table—To |
| Take—(Eat) Kin, Ahan |
| Take care of—Haksa Lavang |
| Talk—Lomkan. |
| Tamarind—Mak Kham |
| Taste—Seem |
| Tax—Phasee |

Third—Theesam.
 Thirsty—Hieu nam
 This—Khon nee, An nee
 Nee

This one—Singnee
 Thousand—Phan
 Throat—Kho Hoi
 Thumb—Po meu
 Thursday—Van phahat
 (*Skt Brihaspativar*)

Ticket—Pee
 Tiger—Seua
 Time—Vela

(*Skt Vela*)

Tin—Dee Bukh.
 Tired—Meuai
 To—Theung
 Tobacco—Yasoob
 Today—Meunee
 Tomorrow—Meu an
 Tonight—Kheun nee
 To be happy—Dee chai
 To be called—Chak
 theuk san

To be pleased—Nindee
 To bring—Aao/ma hai
 To name—Aeun
 To take—Ma aao
 Tomato—Makden
 Tongue—Leen

Too—Phot, Lai thae
 Too big—Ynayi Phot
 Too expensive—
 phaeng phot
 Too heavy—Nak phot
 Too much—Lai Phot
 Tooth—Kheyo
 Toothache—Chep
 khaeyo

Top—Chawm, ynot
 Torch—Fai sai
 Town—Meuang
 Traffic—Chalachon
 (*Skt Chalachan*)

Travel—Deun, Thang
 Tree—Ton mai
 (*Skt Taru*)

Tricycle—Samlow
 Trim—Lem Thangkhong
 Trip—Kaan deum thang
 Trousers—Song seua
 Try—Fayayam.
 Tuesday—Van Ankhaan
 (*Skt Angarwar*)

Tune—Pheng
 Turn—Liao
 Turn back—Kap Kheun
 Turn left—Liao Sai
 Turn right—Liao Khva
 Twelve—Sip Sawng

Twenty—Sao

Two—Sawng

U

Umbrella—Khan Hom

Uncle—Loong

Under—Kong, Thang
Tai

Understand—Khao Chai

Understanding—Khoam
Khao ChaiUniversity—Mahavithya-
laya Lai*(Skt Mahavidyalaya)*

Unripe—Bo suk Din

Up—Theung

Upstairs—Santheung

Urine—Nyao,

Us—Phuak, muhao

V

Vegetable—Phak

Vinegar—Nam som

Very much—Lai lai

Very quick—Vai-vai

Very slowly—Sa sa

Vientiane—Vientian

Vietnamese—Kao Viet-
nam

Violet—See muang

Visitor—Khaek

Vocabulary—Kham sap
(Skt Shabda)

W

Wait—Tha

*(Skt Stha)*Walking Stick—Mai-
khon-ThaoWant—Yak, Tongkan,
Yakdai

War—Song Kham

Warm—Aao

Was—Pen leo, Yoo leo

Wash—Sak, Lang

Watch—Mong

Water—Nam

Water melon—Mak Mo

Water supply—Nam
papa

Wave—Kheun

Way—Thang, Vithi

(Skt Vithi)

We—Haou, Mou haou

Weak—Meuae

Weather—Akat

(Skt Akash)

Wednesday—Van Phut

*(Skt Buddhavar)*Week—Athit *(Skt Aditya)*

| | |
|--|----------------------------|
| Weekly—Lai athit, Sap- pada (<i>Skt Saptah</i>) | Work—Hetviyak, Wiyak |
| Weep—Hayi | Worker—Khonngan |
| Weigh—Sang, tuang | Would like—Tonkan, Yak |
| Welcome—Tonlap | Wound—Bat-Phae |
| Well—Sabai dee | Wrist—Kho Meu |
| Well—Namsang | Write—Khian |
| Were—Pen leo | Writing pad—Chia |
| Wet—Piak | Khian nangseu |
| What—Yang, Andai | Wrong—Phit |
| What kind—Neo dai | |
| What sort of—Sanit dai | Y |
| When—Meudai, Pandai, Yamdai | Yard—Lar |
| Where—Shi, Bondai, Yusai | Yardstick—Maimet |
| Where is—Yu sai | Year—Pee |
| White—See khao | Yellow—See Leuang |
| Who—Phai, Phudai | Yes—Doye, Aw, Maen leo |
| Wide—Kuang | Yesterday—Meuvani, Vani |
| Wife—Mia | Yet—Yang |
| Will—See, Chaa | You—Than, Chao, Phuak. |
| Win—Phae, sana | Young girl—Sao Noom |
| Wind—Lom | Your—Khong chao |
| Window—Pongyiam | |
| With—Duai, Kap, Nam | Z |
| With me—Nam Khoy | Zing—Sang Kasee |
| Woman—Phuying, Phusao (<i>Skt Purusha</i>) | Zoo—Suan Sat |
| Wood—Mai | (<i>Skt Suvan Satva</i>) |

APPENDICES



MAHĀMAṄGALASUTTAM

Evam me sutam:

Ekam samayanā Bhagavā Sāvatthiyaṃ viharati Jetavane
Anāthapiṇḍikassa ārāme. Atha kho aññatarā devatā
abhikkantāya rattiyaṃ abhikkantavannā kevalakappaṃ
Jetavanam ohhāsetvā yena Bhagavā ten upasaṅkami,
upasaṅkamitvā Bhagavantam abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ
aṭṭhāsi. Ekamantaṃ thitā kho sā devatā Bhagavantam
gāthāya ajjhabhāsi:

“Bahū devā manussā ca maṅgalāni acintayum
ākaṅkhamānā sotthānaṃ, brūhī maṅgalaṃ uttamaṃ.” 1
“Asevanā ca bālānaṃ paṇḍitānaṃ ca sevanā
pūja ca pūjanīyānaṃ, etaṃ maṅgalaṃ uttamaṃ.
Patirūpadesaṃso ca pubbe ca katapuññatā
uttasammāpaṇidhi ca, etaṃ maṅgalaṃ uttamaṃ. 3
Bāhusaccaṃ ca sippaṃ ca vinayo ca sūsisikkhiṭṭo
subhāsita ca yā vācā, etaṃ... 4
Mātāpitu upaṭṭhānaṃ puttadārassa saṅgaho
anākulā ca kammantā, etaṃ... 5
Dānaṃ ca dhammacariyā ca nātakānaṃ ca saṅgaho
anavajjāni kammāni, etaṃ... 6
Ārati virati pāpā majjapānā ca saññāmo
appamādo ca dhammesu, etaṃ... 7
Gāravo ca nivāto ca santuṭṭhi ca kataññutā
kālena dhammasavanam, etaṃ... 8
Khantī ca sovacassatā samaṇānaṃ ca dassanam
kālena dhammasācchā, etaṃ... 9
Tapo ca brahmacariyam ca ariyasaccāna dassanam
nibbānasacchikiriyaṃ ca, etaṃ... 10
Phuṭṭhassa lokadhammehi cittaṃ yassa na kampati
asokaṃ virajaṃ khemaṃ etaṃ... 11
Etādisāni katvāna sabbattha-m-aparājita,
sabbattha sotthim gacchanti, taṃ tesam maṅgalaṃ
uttamanti.”

Mahāmaṅgalasuttam Nisīhitam

12

महामंगलसुत्तं

एवं मे सुतं । एकं समयं भगवा सावत्थियं विहरति जेतवने अनाथ-
पिण्डिकस्स आरामे । अथ खो अञ्जतरा देवता अभिक्कन्ताय रत्तिया
अभिक्कन्तवण्णा केवलकप्पं जेतवनं ओमासेत्वा येन भगवा तेनुपसङ्कमि,
उपसङ्कमित्वा भगवन्तं अभिवादेत्वा एकमन्तं अट्ठासि । एकमन्तं ठिता खो
सा देवता भगवन्तं याथाय अञ्ज मासि—

बहू देवा मनुस्सा च, मङ्गलानि अचिन्तयुं ।
आक्खमाणा सोत्थानं, बूहि मङ्गलमुत्तमं ॥१॥
असेवना च बालानं, पण्डितानं सेवना ।
पूजा च पूजनीयानं, एतं च मङ्गलमुत्तमं ॥२॥
पतिरूपदेसवासो च, पुम्भे च कतपुञ्जता ।
घत्तसम्मापणिधि च, एतं मङ्गलमुत्तमं ॥३॥
बाहुसच्चं च सिप्पं च, विनयो च सुसिक्खितो ।
सुमासिता च या वाचा, एतं मङ्गलमुत्तमं ॥४॥
मातापितु उपट्ठानं, पुत्तदारस्स सङ्गहो ।
अनाकुला च कम्मन्ता, एतं मङ्गलमुत्तमं ॥५॥
दानं च धम्मचरिया च, जातकानं च सङ्गहो ।
अनवज्जानि कम्ममि, एतं मङ्गलमुत्तमं ॥६॥
आरति विरति पापा, मज्जपाना च सञ्जमो ।
अप्पमादो च धम्मेसु, एतं मङ्गलमुत्तमं ॥७॥
गारयो च निवातो च, सत्तुट्ठि च कतब्बुता ।
कालेन धम्मसवणं, एतं मङ्गलमुत्तमं ॥८॥
खन्ति च सोवचस्सता, समणानं च दस्सनं ।
कालेन धम्मसाकच्छा, एतं मङ्गलमुत्तमं ॥९॥
तपो च ब्रह्मचरियं च, अरियसच्चान दस्सनं ।
निम्बाणसच्छिकिरिया च, एतं मङ्गलमुत्तमं ॥१०॥

पुद्गलस्स लोकयन्मेहि, चित्तं यस्स न कम्पति ।
 अतोक्कं विरजं खेमं एतं मङ्गलमुत्तमं ॥११॥
 एताविसानि कत्तवान्, सम्बत्थमपराजिता ।
 सम्बत्थं सोत्थि गच्छन्ति, तं तेसं मङ्गलमुत्तमन्ति ॥१२॥
 महामङ्गलकुलं निद्रितं ।

MAHĀMANGALASUTTA

(*English Translation*)

So it was heard by me:

At one time Bhagavat dwelt at Savathī, in Jetavana, in the park of Anathapindika. Then, when the night had gone, a deity of beautiful appearance, having illuminated the whole Jetavana, approached Bhagavat, and having approached and saluted him, he stood apart, and standing apart that deity addressed Bhagavat in a stanza:

1. 'Many gods and men have devised blessings, longing for happiness, tell thou (me) the highest blessing.'

2. Buddha said: 'Not cultivating the society of fools, but cultivating the society of wise men, worshipping those that are to be worshipped, this is the highest blessing'.

3. 'To live in a suitable country, to have done good deeds in a former existence, and a thorough study of one's self, this is the highest blessing'.

4. 'Great learning and skill, well-learned discipline, and well-spoken words, this is the highest blessing'.

5. 'Waiting on mother and father, protecting child and wife, and a quiet calling, this is the highest blessing.'

6. 'Giving alms, living religiously, protecting relatives, blameless deeds, this is the highest blessing'.

7. 'Ceasing and abstaining from sin, refraining from intoxicating drink, perseverance in the Dhammas, this is the highest blessing'.

8. Reverence and humility, contentment and gratitude, the hearing of the Dhamma at due seasons, this is the highest blessing'.

9. Patience and pleasant speech, dialogue with Samanas, religious conversation at due seasons, this is the highest blessing.

10. 'Penance and chastity, discernment of the noble truths, and the realisation of Nibbana, this is the highest blessing'.

11. 'He whose mind is not shaken when he is touched by the things of the world-lokadhamma, but remains free from sorrow, free from defilement, and secure, this is the highest blessing'.

12. 'Those who, having done such things, are undefeated in every respect, walk in safety everywhere, theirs is the highest blessing.'

Immortal Sayings of the Buddha

(Buddha is the flower of our race, the finest blossom of humanity, the greatest philosopher that ever lived.

His Venerable Religion has in it the Eternity of an universal hope, the immortality of a boundless love, an element of faith in final good and the proudest assertion ever made of human freedom. His sayings are sharp and witty and behind his voice is the eternal call to salvation.)

Go ye, O Bhikkhus and wander forth for the gain of the many, in compassion for the world, for the welfare of the many, for the good, for the gain, for the welfare of gods and men. Proclaim, O Bhikkhus, the Doctrine Glorious, preach ye a life of holiness, perfect and pure.

Heedfulness is the path to the deathless, heedlessness is the path to death. The heedful do not die, the heedless are like unto the death.

Distinctly understanding this (difference), the wise in heedfulness, rejoice in heedfulness, delighting in the realm of the Ariyas.

The ever meditative, the ever steadfastly persevering wise ones realise Nibbana, free of bonds, the highest.

Continually increases the glory of his who is energetic, mindful, pure in deed, discriminative, self-controlled, right living, and heedful.

By effort, earnestness, discipline, and self-control, let the wise man make for himself an island which no flood can overwhelm.

The ignorant, foolish folk indulge in heedlessness; but the wise man guards earnestness as the greatest treasure.

Indulge not in wantonness, have no intimacy with sensuous delights. The earnest meditative person obtains abundant bliss.

When the sagacious one casts away wantonness, by sanity, this sorrowless wise one ascends the palace of wisdom and beholds the ignorant sorrowing folk as a mountaineer, the groundings.

Heedful amongst the heedless, wide awake amongst the sleepy, the wise man advances like a swift horse, leaving a weak jade behind.

By earnestness Indra became the chief of Devas. Earnestness is ever praised; wantonness is ever despised. The Bhikkhu who delights in earnestness and looks with fear on negligence advances like fire, burning all fetters, great and small.

Hatreds never cease by hatreds in this world. By love alone they cease. This is an ancient Law.

The other know not that in this quarrel we perish. Those of them who realise it have their quarrels calmed thereby.

Whatever harm a foe may do to a foe or hater to a hater, an ill-directed mind can do one still greater harm.

What neither mother, nor father, nor any other relative could do a well-directed mind does, and thereby elevates one.

As a bee, without harming the flower, its colour or scent, flies away, collecting only the honey, even so should the sage wander in the village.

He should not regard the faults of others, things done by others, but his own deeds done and undone.

As a flower that is lovely and beautiful, but is scentless, even so fruitless is the well-spoken word of one who does it not.

As a flower that is lovely, beautiful, and scent-laden even so fruitful is the well-spoken word of one who does it.

As from a heap of flowers many a garland is made, even so many good deeds should be done by one born mortal.

The perfume of flowers blows not against the wind, nor does the fragrance of sandal-wood, tagara, and jasmine. The fragrance of the virtuous does blow against the wind; the virtuous man pervades every direction.

Sandal-wood, tagara, lotus, jasmine—of all these kinds of fragrance, the perfume of virtue is by far the best.

Of little account is the fragrance of tagara or sandal. The fragrance of the virtuous that blows even amongst the devas is excellent.

Long is the night to the wakeful, long is the road to him who is weary, long is Samsara to the foolish who know not the sublime Truth.

If a seeker should not find a companion who is his better or equal, he should resolutely pursue a solitary course. There is no fellowship with the foolish.

"Sons have I, Wealth have I," Thus is the fool worried; verily, he himself is not his own.

Whence son? Whence wealth?

Though all his life a fool associates with wise man, he will no more understand the Dhamma than a spoon, the flavour of soup.

Though, for a moment only, an intelligent person associates with a wise man, quickly the Dhamma he understands as the tongue, the flavour of soup.

"Let the laymen and the monks both think that this was done by myself. In every work, great or small, let them refer to me." Such is the aspiration of the fool; his desires and pride increase.

Should one see a wise man, who, as if indicating a treasure, points out faults and reproves; let one associate with such a wise person: it will be better, not worse, for him who such a person follows.

Associate not with evil friends or with mean men. Do associate with good friends and noble men.

Better than a thousand useless words is a single useful sentence, hearing which one is pacified.

Better than thousand useless stanzas is a single useful stanza, hearing which one is pacified.

Though he should conquer a thousand men in the battlefield, yet he indeed, is the noblest victor who would conquer himself.

Though he should live a hundred years, immoral and uncontrolled; yet better, indeed is it to live a single day virtuous and meditative.

Though he should live a hundred years, with no knowledge and no control; yet better, indeed, is the single day's life of one who is wise and meditative.

Let a man make haste to do good, let him keep his

mind from sin, for if a man is slow to do good, his mind delights in sin.

If a man commits a sin, let him not continue in it; let him not seek after evil for suffering is the outcome of wrong doing.

If a man does a good act, let him do it again and again, let him develop a longing for good; happiness is the outcome of good deeds.

Think not lightly of sin, saying, "It will not come unto me." Even a jar is filled with water by the constant falling of drops of water. So does the unwise man, little by little fills himself with evil.

Not in the sky, nor in the depths of the sea, nor in a mountain cave should one seek resort; for there exists no place on earth where a man can escape the fruit of his evil deeds.

The man of little learning goes through like an ox; his flesh increases, but his wisdom does not.

Self is the lord of self; what higher Lord could there be? When a man subdues well his self, he will have found a lord very difficult to find.

Let a man rouse himself, and not be heedless: let him follow the doctrine of good life. The righteous rests happily in this world and the next.

Health is the greatest acquisition; contentment the greatest wealth; confidence is the best of relatives; Nibbana is the highest happiness.

Let a man conquer anger by absence of anger, wickedness by absence of wickedness, miserliness by liberality, and lies by truth.

Non-repetition is the corroder of the sacred texts; non-repair is the canker of a good house, sloth is the blemish of beauty, and heedlessness the taint of the watchman.

He who destroys life, who speaks untruth, who takes in this world that which is not given to him, who consorts with another man's wife, who is addicted to intoxicating drinks, (Sura, Meraya) such a man digs his own grave even in this world.

There is no fire like unto lust: there is no strangling grip like unto hatred; there is no ensnaring net like unto infatuation; there is no river torrent like unto craving.

A man is not custodian of the law because he speaks much but he who having studied the Law only a little can visualize it in himself. He is called *The Custodian of the Law*, for he is not negligent therein.

A man is not an elder among the Bhikkhus because his hair is gray; he may be ripe in years, yet called "The Fruitless old."

The gift of the law excels all other gifts; the flavour of the law surpasses all other flavours; zest in the Law exceeds all other zests for things; extinction of craving conquers all suffering.

He is called a Bhikkhu who has control over his hands feet and tongue; who exercises excellent restraint with them, and seeks his delight in meditation; who is concentrated and rests content with the solitary life.

There is no meditation for him who lacks insight, there can be no insight for him who meditates not. He in whom both meditation and insight are to be found, approaches indeed Nibbana.

Self is the Lord of self; what other Lord could there be ? Self is the goal of self, therefore control the self as a merchant controls a horse of noble breed.

A man is not Brahmin by reason of his matted hair or his lineage or his caste. In whom are to be found Truth and Law he is pure, he is Brahmin.

Him I call a Brahmin who possesses wisdom and is intelligent, who is expert in his knowledge of the path, what he should do and what should not, and who has attained the supreme goal.

Parallel sayings of Mahatma Gandhi

(Buddha's teachings inspired Mahatma Gandhi who preached and practised eternal principles of Non-violence, Compassion and Truth in the political life of the nation. He made the mighty imperialism of the day ineffective. Some of his immortal sayings are as follows)

True beauty consists in purity of heart. [*Beauty*]

Strength of numbers is the delight of the timid. The valient of spirit glory in fighting alone. And the valour of spirit cannot be achieved without sacrifice, determination, faith and humility. [*Bravery*]

There is a higher court than courts of justice and that is the court of conscience. It supercedes all other courts. [*Conscience*]

Heroes are made in the hour of defeat. Success is, therefore, well described as a series of glorious defeats. It is the spirit that defies defeat. [*Defeat*]

Honest differences are often a healthy sign of progress. [*Difference*]

Discipline is to disorder what bulworks and embankments are to storms and floods. [*Discipline*]

I have always felt that the true text book for the pupil is his teacher. Man is neither mere intellect, nor the gross animal body, nor the heart or soul alone. A proper and harmonious combination of all the three is required for the making of the whole man and constitutes the true economics of education. [*Education*

Whenever I see an erring man I say to myself I have also erred, when I see a lustful man I say to myself, so was I once; and in this way I feel kinship with everyone in the world and feel that I cannot be happy without the humblest of us being happy.

Confession of error is like a broom that sweeps away dirt and leaves the surface cleaner than before. [*Error*

My ambition is much more than independence. Through the deliverance of India, I seek to deliver the so-called weaker races of the earth from the crushing heels of foreign exploitation.

My conception of freedom is no narrow conception. It is co-extensive with the freedom of men in all his majesty. [*Freedom*

Friendship that insists upon agreement on all matters is not worth the name. Friendship to be real must ever sustain the weight of honest differences, however sharp they may be. [*Friendship*

Hatred (some people argue) cannot be turned into love. Those who believe in violence will naturally use it by saying 'Kill your enemy; injure him and his property wherever you can, whether openly or secretly as necessity requires.' The result will be deeper : hatred and counter hatred and vengeance let loose on both sides. The recent war, whose embers have yet hardly died, loudly proclaims the bankruptcy of this use of hatred. And it remains to be seen whether they have not depressed themselves in seeking and trying to depress their enemies. [*Hatred*

It is better to stand erect with a broken and bandaged head than to crawl on one's belly in order to save one's head.

[*Honour*

I am a humble servant of India and in trying to serve India, I serve humanity at large. After nearly fifty years of public life I am able to say today that my faith in the doctrine, that the service of one's nation, is not inconsistent with the service of the world has grown. It is a good doctrine. Its acceptance alone will ease the situation in the world and stop the mutual jealousies between nations inhabiting this globe of ours. [*Humanity*

It is impossible for one to be an internationalist without being a nationalist. Internationalism is possible only when nationalism becomes a fact. When peoples belonging to different countries have organised themselves and are able to act as one man. It is not nationalism that is evil, it is the narrowness, selfishness, exclusiveness which is the bane of modern nations which is evil. Each wants to profit at the expense of, and rise on the ruins of the other. Indian nationalism has struck a different path. It wants to organise itself for the benefit and service of humanity at large.

[*Internationalism*

Justice that love gives is a surrender, justice that law gives is a punishment.

[*Law*

It may be long before the law of love will be recognised in international affairs. The machineries of governments stand between and hide the hearts of one people from those of another.

Love never claims, it ever gives. Love never resents never revenges itself but ever suffers.

[*Love*

Let us not think of that distant view let us make use of present.

[*Make Use of the Present*

Mankind is one, seeing that all are equally subject to moral law. All men are equal in the eyes of god.

[*Mankind*

For me it is enough to know the means. Means and ends are convertible terms in my philosophy of life.

[*Means and Ends*]

I have found mere preaching of Ahimsa does not do at all. People cannot realise the unmanifest. When spirit becomes flesh then they can see and understand it.

Ahimsa is unmanifest. You have to become Ahimsa made-flesh -you should live Ahimsa.

Violence has no positive life. It is a negative thing. Violence can exist only where there is resistance.

Non-violence does not seize power. It does not even seek power. Power occurs to it. It is like the awakening of the soul of the people.

My religion is based on Truth and Non-violence. Truth is my God. Non-violence is the means of realising Him.

Non-violence is not a mechanical thing. You do not become non-violent by merely saying 'I shall not use force.' It must be felt in the heart, when there is that feeling it will express itself through some action.

[*Non-violence*]

I would not like to live in this world if it is not to be one world.

Our objective is one world, we have to work for it and for the brotherhood of all humanity. Our only ultimate weapon in our fight of non-violence is soul force.

The structure of a world federation can be raised only on a foundation of non-violence, and violence will have to be given up in world affairs.

[*One world*]

If I have my say our President and our Prime Minister would be drawn from kisans. In my childhood I have learnt in the school books that the kisans have been heirs to the kingdom of the earth. This applies to those who

labour on the land and eat from what they produce. Such kisans to be worthy of high offices may be illiterate provided but have robust common sense, great personal bravery, unimpeachable integrity and patriotism above suspicion. As real producers of wealth they are verily the masters while we have enslaved them.

[*Peasants Masters*

Power does not come to a man because he does things that hard, but because he does things with a pure heart.

[*Power*

Ill-digested principles are if anything, worse than ill-digested food, for the latter harm the body and there is cure for it whereas the former ruins the soul and there is no cure for it.

[*Principles*

I see no poverty in the world of tomorrow, no wars, no revolutions, no bloodshed. And in that world there will be faith in God greater and deeper than in the past. The very existence of the world, in a broad sense, depends on religion. All attempts to root it out will fail.

One's own religion is after all a matter between oneself and one's Maker and no one else's.

[*Religion*

Joy comes not out of infliction of pain on others but out of pain voluntarily borne by oneself.

No sacrifice is worth the name unless it is a joy. Sacrifice and a long face go ill-together. He must be a poor specimen of humanity who is in need of sympathy for his sacrifice.

The law of sacrifice is uniform throughout the world. To be effective it demands the sacrifice of the bravest and the most spotless.

[*Sacrifice*

Real affection is not shown through praise, but through service. Self-purification is a preliminary process, an indispensable condition of real service.

Service which is rendered without joy helps neither the servant nor the served. But all other pleasures and possessions pale into nothingness before service which is rendered in a spirit of joy [*Service*

People are the roots and the state is the fruit. If the roots are sweet the fruits are bound to be sweet. [*State*

I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. I refuse to live in other people's houses as an interloper, a beggar or a slave. [*Synthesis of Cultures*

Abstract truth has no value for me unless it incarnates in human beings who represent it by proving their readiness to die for it.

Truth is like a vast tree which yields more and more fruit, and more you should nurture it, the deeper the search in the mine of truth, the richer the discovery of the gems buried therein and the shape of opening for an ever greater variety of service. [*Truth*

If you want to convert your opponent you must present to him better and nobler side. Work on, round, upon that side. Do not dangle his faults before him.

[*Turning the enemy to a friend*

The world, though not itself virtuous pays an unconscious homage to virtue. [*Virtue*

It is unwise to be sure of one's own wisdom. It is healthy to be reminded that the strongest might weaken and the wisest might err. [*Wisdom*

Letters from Laos

No. 1

Vientiane, LAOS

Dear Friend,

This is my humble contribution to the discovery of India's indelible impact on this part of South-East Asia. It seems that our forefathers have been generous and the gentle conquest of righteousness with its elevating and refining social effects on this country has perhaps no parallel in the history of world civilization. In spite of the forced conversion by Islam, the beauty of Indian culture thrives in its customs, myths, traditions, scriptures, architecture and literature like the immortal splendour that often shines between the lines of a great poem.

An attempt has been made to prove the cultural affinities between our two countries. The Laotian words have, for the first time, been traced to their parentage—Sanskrit.

I am sure the enclosed letters on life, literature and culture will interest you and your friends. A line in reply will oblige.

Yours faithfully
(S. R. Sehgal)

No. 2

Vientiane, LAOS
8.10.66

Dear Friend,

You will be pleased to learn that I reached Vientiane, LAOS on the 16th of June, 1966. On my way I, as usual

with other passengers, broke my journey at Bangkok for the night. I met Pt. Raghunath Sharma, Honorary, Director, Thai Bharat Cultural Lodge, a devoted worker for the promotion of our ties with Thailand. In the hotel, I picked up a word of its greeting *Sabaddi Khap*—which I immediately felt to be of Sanskrit origin. Its derivation from the Sanskrit word *Svasti* thrilled me as well as my friends.

Vientiane is a small town with a population of two lakhs situated on the Mekong river. There is a large number of monasteries, where Bhikkhus live and study Buddhist texts following the ancient pattern of India. They have local pronunciation due to their early education in Laotian language. This language contains a few consonants unlike our Nagari script. The letters, ञ, घ, ञ, ज, ङ, ञ, ञ, द, व, ञ, ञ are not found. These people are therefore unable to pronounce Gandhi, and Gulab which they speak as Kandhi, and Kulab respectively.

It appears that nobody took cognizance of this fact and the sacred tradition of the heritage of Buddhist texts has become corrupt. Sanskrit has been taught here through the incomplete script of Laotian language with the result that pronunciation has degenerated. I feel the study of Sanskrit like that of French and English through the basic scripts will set the matter right in due course of time.

I am glad to inform you that Sanskrit and Pali are in the blood of the people of South-East Asia and they have derived their names of days and months from Sanskrit. For instance, Sunday is called Van-Athita, which is derived from *Adityavar*, i.e., Athita-Aditya, Van-Var, the ending 'r' is pronounced as 'n' (e.g., Ahana (Laotian) *Ahara* (Skt.), Achan (Laotian) *Acharya* (Skt.)). In North India 'Itwar' is also derived from *Adityavar* dropping the initial 'Ad'. This shows the pervasive influence of Sanskrit and I would call it a marvel of history on the part of Indian grammarians who gradually fashioned this magnificent language.

There are about 400 Indians in service as well as in business. Generally there is respect for Indians. Sindhis are in textile business. There is a road in the name of the late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and a Nehru Park is in the making.

The impact of scriptures, sculpture, literature and traditional educational system and religion of India is visible in the life of this Buddhist country. The Laotian pattern of life from cradle to grave is Indian. Monks are deeply respected. Parties of Bhikkhus go out in the morning when 'la belle dame' greets them with bowls of rice respectfully. The scene is so moving that one is apt to pause and feel a thrill, enchantment and fascination.

The town life is costly because there is no industry and everything is imported. The French have left no initiative, no industry, nor high education. Woman education is upto the secondary standard as there are few high schools and no college. My students are non-vegetarian and are accustomed to smoking. These things perhaps are a legacy of the French culture in this country.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,
(S. R. Sehgal)

No. 3

Vientiane, LAOS
8.12.66

Dear Friend,

In my previous letter I gave you my first impressions about Vientiane. Today I would like to tell you more about the role of Pali, a dialect of Sanskrit. Everyday I

feel convinced that this sacred language of our country has rendered yeoman's service to the propagation of the values we cherish. The gifts of our culture have come down to all of us in the form of a great heritage.

Our forefathers were of liberal disposition and that is why they could spread our message successfully in far off lands, across the wide seas, high mountains and bleak deserts. They sent dedicated missionaries to far away countries through this magnificent language, arts and architecture.

During my short stay in LAOS, I have often been delighted by the similarity of customs, of ideas, of the common pattern of life and of common words though pronounced differently. Not a day passes when I am not amazed at the colourful history of the words. For example there is a word 'Bun' often used by the people of LAOS. Whenever there is a party, whenever there is a festival, or whenever there is a gathering on weddings, the rhythm of this word is heard. For sometime I could not appreciate the beauty of this word though the romance around it always touched me to the core. The word haunted me for many weeks, and at last the mystery was revealed. It is a Sanskrit/Pali word *Punya/Punna* (merit) assimilated into the local language—Lao, into Bun. The initial 'p' of Sanskrit words is invariably pronounced as 'b' in this region. The Sanskrit/Pali words *Papa* (sin), *Pita* (Father) and *Puja* (Worship) are pronounced as Bap, Bida and Busa respectively.

Convincingly most of the proper names in this region are drawn from Pali literature and consequently they bear deeper ties with India. The Monk community takes pride in embellishing their names with the word Bun (*Punna, Punya*). The following proper names are commonly adopted in this country, i.e., Bunlert—of excellent merits, Bunnu—knowing the merits, Bunna—of acquired merits, Bunkhong—of standing merits, Bunlean

-of thrived merits, Bunmee-of achieved merits, Bunthan
-of acquired merits, Bunsai-of resplendant merits, etc.

Both in the Wats as well as the Royal families, the use of Sanskrit/Pali words and idiom is remarkable. The monks while saying 'How old are you' would say 'Ayu tho dai' in place of Lao expression 'Chak pee'. And so also the members of the Royal Family. The limbs of the Royal persons are embellished with Sanskrit words. The king is called Phra Rasa, the Queen is Phra Mahesi, their heads Phra siras, their face Phra mukh, the Crown Prince 'Ong monk-ut (Ang Mukut)—what an amazing influence of Sanskrit/Pali on the life of the Buddhist people! I have very often been reminded of high characters in Sanskrit Plays who could speak Sanskrit on the stage. The monks address themselves as 'Attma' like the Indian Monks who call themselves as 'Atmarama, i.e., delighting in spiritual heights.

Majority of the rites and rituals connected with the birth and death are akin to ours. In marriages the white thread (called Phukhain—Mongal sutta) is fastened to the wrists of the bride and the bridegroom.

They are blessed by elders. Like India there prevails the dowry system. Monks like Brahmans perform all religious rites. The striking resemblance is that men wear dhotis on these occasions which is a relic of Vedic times. Prayers of birth rituals are the same as in the Atharva Veda. To illustrate this point. 'May you have a house full of children, and grand children rejoicing in your own family'. This sounds like the rendering of a Vedic mantra. The wedding is called Vivaha in LAOS. Here the custom is that the Bridegroom goes to the house of the bride for good. In a every few cases, however, they follow the Indian custom and such marriages are called Aavah.

The cremation rites are also identical. Prayers are said for the peace of the departed souls. Dead bodies are burnt. If an old man or woman dies there is a big

feast in which all relations and friends are invited to participate. Some persons throw coins over the dead body which are treasured as a symbol of longevity. In this country a peculiar custom is that the dead body is sometimes kept in the monasteries or at home for about five or ten days. The dead body is given an injection to avoid bad smell,

Manu, Chanakya and others had laid the foundation of an ideal society based on Dharma/Dhamma. This inseparable unity of the material and spiritual world has determined the whole character of social ideals of India and these Buddhist countries.

The words are heirlooms which stand for thoughts, knowledge and feelings. They stand for tradition, histories, all poetry, all our philosophical systems and all that we are and will be. It is the nutshell in the fairy tale, out of which the endless web is forthcoming, unrolling fold after fold of marvellous designs and matchless variety of colour.

I would like to conclude my letter with a line from Kalidasa, the great poet of our Golden Age. He had seen the country united and had sung the glory of India across the Himalayas dancing on the waves of the seas carrying the message of the synthesis of man's eternal myths, values and aspirations :—

'Dvipántarānitalavāṅgapuspaiḥ'

'The fragrance treasured from the neighbouring countries'.

Yours sincerely,
(S. R. Sehgal)

22.7.67

Dear Friend,

You will be glad to know that a planned scheme has been conceived and is being executed to revive interest in and love for Pali—a dialect of Sanskrit in this country. The monk community of South-East Asia studies Pali and its magnificent literature but their knowledge of the sacred language is very limited. With a view to inculcating deeper interest in the subject, a series of proverbs of Pali has been drawn from Buddhist classics. The enclosed posters contain three well-known proverbs couched in ancient Laotian script, translated into Lao poetry, further transcribed into its original Brahmi script and finally rendered into English. The first proverb deals with Universal love—the Buddha's fundamental concept of equality—similar to U.N. Charter, and the second treats of the Buddhist way of merits. The third tells us how to gather and treasure knowledge.

You will appreciate that such proverbs* sometimes help in releasing springs in the unconscious minds of the people and the deeper interest calls for a reorientation of the attitude. There have been historical personages in all countries who have discovered their souls with the help of these immortal words of wisdom.

*These proverbs are :—

1. Hatred never ceases by hatred at any time indeed. Hatred ceases by love. This is the eternal law.
2. If a man does what is good, let him do it again and again. Let him delight in it. The accumulation of good is delightful.
3. Make the same use of the book as the bee does of a flower. She sucks the sweet honey from it, but does not injure it.

I shall be grateful if you will find time amidst your pressing preoccupations to encourage me in my humble pursuit.

Thanking you,

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,
(S. R. Sehgal)

No. 5

KINGDOM OF LAOS
Ministry of Cultes.

NOTICE

No. 932/T.K.

The Ministry of Cultes is pleased to announce to all officials, soldiers, policemen and all people and merchants residing in Vientiane and other provinces of Laos that Mr. S.R. Sehgal is working as a professor of Sanskrit and Pali at the Buddhist Research Institute, Wat Ongtu, Vientiane, under the Colombo Plan from India. He is not only a distinguished professor of Sanskrit and Pali but is equally eminent in social uplift work.

By virtue of his qualifications, the professor has helped the Ministry of Cultes in highlighting Buddhist values among our people. He has selected a few proverbs from Buddhist classics and published them. Our office has supplied his posters to all important places, e.g., Govt. offices, and public places. The posters under reference contain the sayings of Lord Buddha which will go to improve day-to-day life of our masses in accordance with Dhamma.

If per chance Prof. S.R. Sehgal visits your place in

connection with his mission, he may please be provided with all facilities. This ministry will feel highly obliged for this act of cooperation.

Vientiane 22nd August, 1967

By order of Minister of Cultes,

Somok Vongchareune.
The Chief of the office
of the Minister

No. 6

Vientiane, LAOS
8.9.67

Dear Friend,

You will be glad to learn that some posters designed to revive Pali in Laos have been well received in this country. These were published on 22.6.67 and sent to high priests in Vientiane for display in their monasteries. Later on these were examined and were found to be of greater utility and were hung in Government offices as well as public places. The Ministry of Cultes has collaborated with me in highlighting the programme. To gear up the machinery, they have issued a public notice to help this social campaign. The National Radio of Laos is also mobilizing public opinion by broadcasting this notice.

Among public places Indian merchants were the first to come forward to display these posters at their shops. Various foreigners were fascinated by the significant words and later on some of them made requests for the copies. Among the Government offices the department of Immigration took courage to display them on their walls. This created a thrill in the town in view of its hold as an authority and power. The department of Customs did also follow this noble example. In their



National Assembly hall the portrait of His Majesty the King is flanked by our two posters.

Next the Director of airport was approached and he readily agreed to display them on the walls. Now six posters are hung here as symbol of friendship between India and Laos. Some foreigners from and to Vientiane are delighted to read Lord Buddha's immortal words in original and the translation in more than one language. And some of visitors are found with evident wonder and interest noting words thronging in the corridors of airports and different offices of the government.

Those coming from Bangkok by railway are struck at their beauty in the Immigration Office of Laos at Thadeua. A woman from Australia amidst her worries in filling up the various forms of the Immigration office found relief by reading these words of the apostle of peace in this world. During her flying visit she made frantic efforts to get copies of these posters in the town. At last she was successful in tracing my whereabouts.

Since the verses are couched in Brahmi script some foreigners try to decipher them amidst their leisure moments. This service has created a sense of pride and a source of self-confidence among Indians in Laos. Some Europeans have begun to appreciate that the genius of India is peace and her heritage is still vibrant with the notes of unity and harmony to the spiritual orchestra for humanity.

With kindest regards.

Yours sincerely,
(S. R. Sehgal)

No. 7

Vientiane, LAOS
8.12.67

Dear Friend,

On 22.10.67, some of my students called on me in the afternoon and informed me of a party of monks intending to visit Pakse—a town about 700 kms. from Vientiane for seeing a festival. They pressed me to accompany them. I readily agreed to their proposal. Next day, we left the capital at 6 A.M. in a military transport. At 11 A.M. we had to ferry across a river at Banhai. Monks as usual were hungry to break their fast with non-vegetarian preparations. Being a vegetarian, I had to be content with simple ovaltine and bread. We reached Takhet in the evening. A Bun (festival) was held at Wat Daggua where people from all walks of life gathered with a deep feeling of devotion. Some of them manifested their faith which was nothing short of reason grown courageous. They sang in chorus :—

(i) I seek refuge in the Buddha,

(ii) I seek refuge in the Dhamma.

(iii) I seek refuge in the Sangha.

With this intimate realization they were perhaps near to Him. We spent the night in the same Wat.

Next day, we left for Pakse early in the morning. We were sometimes delighted to see the enchanting beauty of the rich harvest almost refreshing us by the sweet fragrance. At 4 P.M., we reached the destined town where the Bun was held in the evening. The leader of the party Maha Sounthorn Sylaphet arranged the festival with uncommon skill and his enthusiastic fellows spread the message of Dhamma in all directions. Every evening the Wat Thahin was thronged by devotees. Our posters were also displayed in the Bun. During this trip I met Indian merchants, Sardars Harbans Singh and Baldev Singh, known for textile goods in the town. Inheritors of the best Sikh tradition, they have earned reputation for hospitality among the Indians. Mr. Chou Singh, an Indian teacher of English, cooperated with us in spreading the message of the Master. The Officers at the airport offered their cooperation for displaying the posters there. After this auspicious beginning, the posters were enthusiastically received at the various offices, namely Immigration, Police, Customs, Court, Air Lao, Education, Hospitals, etc. Many people took fancy to decipher the Nagari script on the posters.

We saw the morning market in Pakse pulsating with life. The womenfolk were busy in buying and selling vegetables, fruits, meat and fish. Some of them relished meat preparations and others took alcoholic drinks and paraded the crowded shops. The Chinese women known for beauty and with overtones of Western way of life were selling ready made goods.

I snatched one day to visit Paksong a hill-station of this area. It is at a distance of 50 kms. This journey was rewarded because of its rich surroundings—the summit greeting us by rows of majestic trees. Many Viet-

namese people built up their beautiful farms and enriched the wealth of this place. Vegetables, fruits and flowers were grown in plenty. Most of the hotels were run by Vietnamese women.

Saigon, the Paris of Asia, is about 400 kms. from this place. The influence of Vietnam and its brave and beautiful people is evident in this part of a country. We visited O.B. Hospital neat and clean like the temple. The smiling faces of the nurses and doctors greeted us with the word 'Sabaydi'. The doctor-in-charge was overjoyed to see the message of Lord Buddha enshrined in many scripts and many translations. Lo, his heart burst into an assurance. 'It is a masterpiece from the immortal verses of the Lord, a new hope for the war-torn countries. I will ask every patient to memorise these undying proverbs and they will not be discharged from the hospital unless they commit them to memory'. Our efforts were rewarded by this active cooperation. We returned home in the evening.

On 28.10.67, we made up our minds to visit Svanakhet, another province known for rich growth of rice. This time I was escorted by two monk students. We left Pakse early in the morning by 6 A.M. Both sides were flanked with rich fields of rice. The journey was almost soothing. We reached Svanakhet by 1 P.M. The town on the bank of the Mekong river is well-planned. It is clean and sanctified by a large number of Wats. We were fascinated by a massive Wat-Thong where Pali was studied in the temple. There are three Indian merchants dealing in textile goods. With the cooperation of these traders we hung two posters at the airport as a symbol of our relations with this country.

Next day we left Svanakhet for Vientiane in the morning. We reached Takhet at about 11 A.M. where we took tea and changed our bus for the capital. At 4 P.M. we arrived at Banhai to ferry across the river. There was

a long row of trucks as well as cars to be ferried across. I was moved by the great truths of the Buddha and how he had accepted all humanity within his heart. India was revealed. The light spread far beyond the geographical boundaries of India to mark his descent in the history of mankind. The people of other lands were drawn to her by bonds of kinship. India ignored none and therefore was recognised by all and sundry. The barriers of race and nation were swept away by the eternal light of truth. There was an immediate response to this irresistible call and the seas and mountains gave way. Asia was united and lived in the sunlight of the Master's wisdom and in the moonlight of his compassion. His message was spread successfully by Ashok—the Good. He publicly confessed his misdeeds in letters carved on stones and proclaimed the glory of the faith of love and non-violence. He left his stone pillars as an abiding emblem of the teaching of the Master.

We reached Vientiane at about 9 P.M. This Dhammayatra ushered in a new vision both for me as well as for the various monks in Wats where I appraised them of India's different religions, customs and traditions and above all, our great leaders—Gandhi and Nehru.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,
(S. R. Sehgal)

Select opinions on Posters to popularise Pali the Sacred language of the Buddhist canons in South-East Asia.

I was really delighted to note the interest that you have taken to enliven and revive the interest in and love for the Pali dialect by selecting some proverbs from Buddhist Classics and translating the same into Lao poetry, further transcribed into its original Brahmi script and finally rendered into English. I very much appreciate the efforts that you are putting in for the revival of the magnificent literature of Pali in South-East Asia.

Phagna Oun Hueun Norasingh
(The Ambassador of Laos, New Delhi)

... ..

PHNOM PENH
CAMBODIA
1st April, 1968.

Dear Prof. Sebgal,

Many thanks for sending me copies of your letters regarding similarities between the Lao language on the one hand and Sanskrit and Pali on the other. When I was in Laos last year I remember seeing the posters you had designed in Shri G.L. Puri's house.

Wishing you all the very best in your endeavours to promote understanding between India and the Laotian people.

Yours sincerely,
P.N. MENON

... ..

Prof. S.R. Sebgal,
C/O Embassy of India
Vientiane, LAOS.

Your efforts to promote relations between India and LAOS through the revival of Pali are highly commendable. During the Budget discussions of the Ministry of



Foreign Affairs, I suggested to the Government to foster our relations with the Buddhist countries. I am indeed very happy to note that you have already launched a splendid programme in that context. I congratulate you on this mission.

Prakash Vir Shastri
(Member of Parliament)

... ..

Thank you very much for your co-operation in keeping alive the best of Laos culture through your scholarly work.

J. Russell Andrus
Chief of Education Division, US Aid
Mission to Laos.

... ..

Your idea of publishing posters containing the wise sayings of the Buddha is certainly most laudable. The sayings which you have selected for the posters are excellent. I agree with you and believe that such magnificent proverbs put out in the form of posters will immensely help in reviving interest in Pali and serve as an inspiration to the people.

I wish you all success in this undertaking.

Prof. Dr. R.N. Dandekar
Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona-4.
(Maharashtra)

... ..

Your beautiful and excellent posters reached me in time. Thank you very much. It is indeed an entirely novel idea to issue such posters, particularly in Buddhist countries. Such ventures will not only do something good at large but strengthen our cultural ties which have

come unbroken for long. May I take the opportunity to congratulate you for this excellent service.

Prof. Dr. C. S. Upasak.
Nalanda University, NALANDA. (Bihar)

... ..

I thank you for your earliest dispatch of posters, which I am arranging to display in our Library.

Your efforts to popularise Pali Language and the noble ideals enshrined in Pali Literature in South-East Asia are certainly laudable. I congratulate you on your having pioneered in that direction.

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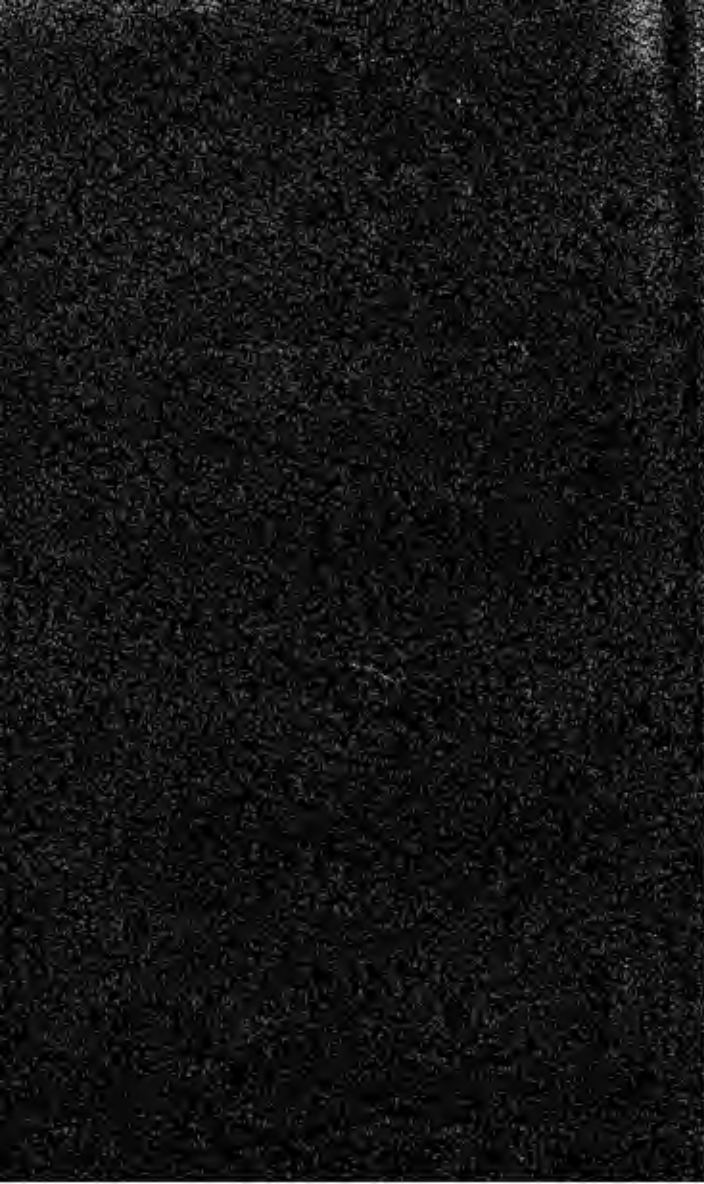
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